MEMOIRS OF ARTEMI



MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE OF ARTEMI,

OF

Wagarschapat,

NEAR MOUNT ARARAT, IN ARMENIA:

FROM

THE ORIGINAL ARMENIAN WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

LONDON:

TREUTTEL & WÜRTZ, TREUTTEL, JUN. & RICHTER,
SOHO SQUARE;
PARIS AND STRASBURGH: TREUTTEL & WÜRTZ.

1822.

INTRODUCTION.

A PIECE of auto-biography from the pen of an Asiatic is so rare a phenomenon, that it could scarcely fail, even without any peculiar recommendation, to excite some attention. The Memoirs contained in the following sheets possess, however, not merely that kind of interest which is derived from the personal history of the writer and the narrative of his vicissitudes, adventures, hardships, and sufferings, since they exhibit also a striking picture of the extreme degradation to which the relics of the once flourishing Armenian nation are now reduced in their native land. These professors of a Christianity, which manifestly consists in little more than the observance of certain external forms and ceremonies, are bound down by the double despotism of their Mahometan rulers, and that of their own ecclesiastics, and of such of their countrymen whose wealth and influence

seem to give them a right to tyrannize over their humbler neighbours. The natural consequence of a state of society in which the poor experience from their fellow-men less tenderness and indulgence than brute beasts, is, that all who have opportunities seek abroad that quiet independence and prosperity which are not to be found by any exertion of talents and industry at home: hence the Armenians are closely assimilated with the Jews in their general condition and pursuits. With them they nearly monopolize the traffic of the East; and they have mercantile establishments in many cities of Europe, as London, Marseilles, Venice, and other places. Confining themselves almost exclusively to commerce, few of them, even in Russia, to which part of Armenia is now subject, embrace the military profession; still fewer enter into the civil service, or engage in mechanical trades. These circumstances produce so much the stronger a resemblance between the Armenians and the Jews, since it is the nature of commerce to beget in those who embark in it an indifference to their native

country without firmly attaching them to that of their adoption, how brilliant soever the success that may have attended them in the latter.

In clothing this narrative in an English dress, the Editor has not sought to embellish the language of the original, but to give a faithful transcript of the sentiments of the writer, without even attempting to reconcile such trifling inconsistencies as may be discovered. The orthography of proper names has been scrupulously observed, and for the variations which sometimes occur in them the author alone must be held responsible.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

My mother and my principal instructor frequently advised me, to impress upon my memory the untoward circumstances which might befal me, that I might constantly bear in mind the goodness of God towards me. I followed their counsel, and accustomed myself to commit regularly to writing all incidents as they occurred, and thus formed a complete history of my life in the Armenian language. Several persons who were with me in the Persian campaign, and who knew me well, encouraged, nay, constrained me to translate my Armenian manuscript into Russian; and the example of many others who had done the like, induced me to publish this translation in token of my gratitude, in the first place to the Most High, for his gracious guidance and his mercy towards me, which has protected me in numberless dangers; and in the

next to the many who kindly succoured and consoled me in my deepest distress. Their memory will be cherished by me as long as I live.

The reader will find in my narrative none of the embellishments of oratory: I have given but a simple statement of what actually occurred to me, without introducing a single word that was not spoken.

There are no doubt many inaccuracies in the language and even grammatical errors in this work; these the reader will forgive in a foreigner, and take the perfect truth of my narrative, which many who know me can attest, as a compensation for those blemishes.



MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE

OF

ARTEMI, OF MOUNT ARARAT.

At the time when Simeon was chief patriarch of all Armenia, I was born on the 20th of April, 1774, in the town of Wagarschapat. It is situated near Mount Ararat, and belongs to an Armenian convent of the first rank, called Etschmiazyn, which signifies "The Advent of the Incarnate Son of God." My father, named Astwazatur, that is, "Given by God," (Theodore,) was a skilful cutter and polisher of precious stones; he was not rich, but was highly spoken of by all as a man of strict integrity. He died when I was only four months old, so that I am indebted for my education to my mother alone, who, besides me, was left with another son of five and a daughter of three

years. As I grew up and reason began to dawn, it was my greatest delight to listen to the traditional narratives delivered down, in those parts, from mouth to mouth, frequently from remote antiquity. Not children only, but grown persons also are fond of hearing these stories; and I, for my part, was quite in an extasy whenever I had an opportunity of hearing something that was new to me. It often happened that the children of rich people in our town, after the recital of the deeds of eminent men of antiquity, made up a story that their family was descended from such or such a distinguished personage; while I, on the contrary, was but too keenly reminded of my miserable condition, and made painfully sensible that my mother was a poor helpless widow, who could not gain a scanty livelihood for herself and us without great difficulty and exertion. These unpleasant returns to my own situation were the consequence of the frequent and bitter taunts of our unfeeling neighbours, on account of my mother's necessitous circumstances; and it was no uncommon thing with them, in their supreme contempt of the forlorn widow and her orphans, to aggravate our condition as far as lay in their power.

In seven hundred houses, how opulent or indigent soever were the families which inha-

bited them, there were not more than ten persons who could read. I was one of these ten; for my mother, notwithstanding all the difficulties thrown in the way, not only by her poverty but also by her wealthy and unfeeling neighbours, contrived to give me the best possible education; that is to say, I learned to read and write. In the almost inexpressible misery in which she had constantly to struggle against fate, she had no other wish than that her younger and favourite son might duly qualify himself and be admitted, in her life-time, into the circle of the servants of the temple of the Lord. Such was the end and aim of her wishes, and in this point centered, I may say, all the happiness of her soul. Her desire was fulfilled: I learned all that was requisite, and in September, 1786, I went to the church to evening service, and read, for the first time, the Psalms prescribed for the occasion by our ritual.

The malicious envy of the *starschines* (elders, chiefs) who were present, and whose children, unable to read, were employed in agricultural and domestic occupations, instantly burst forth. Without waiting till I had finished,—"Why," cried they to the priest, "dost thou allow this beggar-brat to read here? he will not do what our children do: give him a sound thrashing

and send him about his business." The feeble-minded priest, in his solicitude to please them, forgot the dignity of his office and the sanctity of the place, and stepping up to me, gave me a violent slap on the face, and drove me from the altar. My mother, overwhelmed by this behaviour of the priest, sunk senseless to the ground: she too was beaten, turned out of the church by command of the *starschines*, and driven home. No sooner was this riotous service over, than the *starschines* ordered the *desätnik** to keep a vigilant eye on me, and not allow me a moment's leisure, that I might not occupy myself with any thing but the usual labours. "This ragged son of an impudent beggar would fain set up for a person of learning, and place himself on a level with our children (as if their children could read): let him go and drive cattle, work in the fields, make water muddy;† in short, we charge you

* From *desät*, ten—a tithing-man, one who has authority over ten others.—*Note of the Translator.*

† The fields which are sown with Turkish wheat are kept under water till the corn is completely ripe. Before the grain is sown it is necessary to disturb this water, for which purpose cattle are driven on the land: the seed is then thrown into the mixture of mud and water which stands in the prints made by their feet, that it may remain covered by both.—*Note of the Author.*

to beat every thing like learning out of his head"—a truly liberal direction, worthy of the heads and hearts of my countrymen!

I heard this order given myself, and then went home, where I found my mother in absolute despair; but deeply as her heart was lacerated by the scene in the church, no sooner did she perceive me than she strove to rally her spirits. She made an effort to dissemble her own anguish in order to comfort me, and at the same time to give me salutary exhortations. "Ah, my son!" cried she "the wicked have not spared thee even in the temple of the Lord; but the wrath of God will be so much the more fiercely roused by their iniquity; he will not fail to punish them for it, and to avenge the outrage done to us. Recollect the injunction of our Saviour: 'If a man smite thee on one cheek, reach him the other also.' But I am afraid, from their threats, that they seek thy life; flee, therefore, from them, my beloved child; conceal thyself in the convent, or repair to the desert; it is evident that thy lot will be not less bitter than mine. I was but four years old when I was carried into captivity, and learned out of ignorance to believe the doctrine of Mohammed. After this I met with many misfortunes, and had to endure many sufferings, till I returned

into the bosom of the true church, and became the wife of a Christian—of thy father. I then esteemed myself happy, but fate exposed me to fresh trials, and nine years since deprived me of my husband, who left me nothing but poverty and you three orphans. I struggled with indigence, striving only to obtain instruction for thee; and that thou mightest have time to receive it, I laboured in thy stead, spared neither my health nor strength, and had moreover to provide for thy subsistence. But in giving thee education, I imagined that I was planting a tree which would afford me agreeable and nutritious fruit in my old age; in thee I hoped to find protection in the infirmities of my declining years, and shade and shelter under thy branches; trusting that thou wouldst be to me the cause of joys which should make me forget my sufferings and misery, and gain me praise and honour for thy sake among our people. God at length granted my prayer, and my heart leaped for joy, but——" Here my poor mother paused for some time, then in a tone expressive of the extreme anguish of her soul, she thus proceeded:—"Ah! ye inhuman wretches! my joy lasted but for a moment; ye tear it from my heart, ye destroy the plant that I cherished, ye pull it up by the roots, and with it all my hopes!"

Thus did my mother at first endeavour to sooth and to cheer me, but by degrees she again sunk into her former despair, began to curse the day of her birth, and, in her murmurs against the inscrutable dispensations of Providence, employed many of the expressions of Job. I strove to pacify her in the best manner I could; for, on account of my youth, I felt only the present disappointment, and was much less concerned about the future than she. My efforts were so far successful that her despair gradually subsided into silent sorrow. Previously to this event I had known nothing of the occurrences of her life; but, in the course of this evening, she related to us, either to relieve her oppressed and wounded heart, or for my instruction, all that had befallen her from her earliest infancy to that time.

"I am of Haikanian* extraction," said she, "for our forefathers were descended from this

---

* Haikan the great-grandson of Japhet, was the first founder of Armenia. He commenced jointly with Nimrod the building of Babylon, but refusing to acknowledge the supremacy of that mighty hunter, he withdrew to his own country, and in a war which ensued he slew Nimrod. After his name the Armenians call themselves Haikanians, and the Haikanian nation.—*Author.*

In the first book of Moses I find no name at all resembling

nation, and, enlightened with the light of the Gospel by St. Gregory the Martyr, the apostle of Armenia, they have stedfastly adhered to the Christian religion. I was born of respectable parents in 1751, in Gasach, (a province of Grusia or Georgia, bordering on Persia,) and was scarcely two years old when I lost my father. Two years afterwards the Lesgians made incessant incursions into Georgia, plundering and laying waste the country, which at the same time was afflicted by so severe a famine that the people were obliged to subsist on grass like the cattle, or on any thing else they could find; and at last the inhabitants were reduced to such extremity, that parents, stifling the emotions of natural affection, cast from them their own offspring. My mother, seeing that herself and I must otherwise inevitably perish with hunger or by the cruelty of the marauders, fled with me to Erivan, with the intention of proceeding thence to Wagarschapat, where the inhabitants lived in the enjoyment of perfect peace and plenty, and where my eldest sister was married to a man who was by no means poor. Unfortunately,

---

this, excepting among the descendants of Seth, a Jakeran, son of Eber, who lived at the time of the partition of the earth. See Gen. x, 25.—*Translator.*

after we had travelled about two days, our caravan was attacked and totally plundered by the Lesgians; the old people were slain and the young carried off as captives. They took me away among the latter; but threw my mother, on account of her age and infirmities, on the ground, stripped her of all her clothes, and cruelly left her lying stark naked. I was soon sold by them to a wealthy Persian, named Tsholog-Saphar-Beg, residing in the Persian city of Gandshu, who, pitying my youth, did not treat me like a slave, but brought me up as his own child, and had me instructed in various branches of knowledge, and in his own religion. I made great progress in learning, and thus two years had scarcely elapsed, when Saphar-Beg, perceiving that his care and kindness were not thrown away, resolved to receive me into his family, betrothed me in my seventh year to his only son, and caused a *kabin*, or marriage-contract, to be drawn up by his mullah. Four more years elapsed, and I was just eleven years old, when my benefactor fixed the period for our nuptials; but just before the time my bridegroom was attacked by a dangerous illness.

"Meanwhile my mother, as she afterwards informed me, after lying some time on the spot where she was left by the plunderers,

came to herself, deplored her fate and mine, and at length proceeded without clothes, and with a heart rent by despair, to the neighbouring village of Shamkor, where she lived for some years. Her circumstances improved; but as she could not stifle the feelings of maternal tenderness and anxiety, she determined to go in quest of me, should the search even cost her her life. The first place to which she came was Gandshu, where I actually was; but she could not find me there, for such events as that through which I had been brought to the place, and the sale of prisoners of all ages and both sexes, are by no means unusual, especially at times. She then went to Georgia, and thence to Shushi, the capital of Karabag; and there, meeting with a favourable opportunity, she threw herself at the feet of the Pan-Khan, representing to him her misery on account of the loss of her daughter, and soliciting his assistance. This just and generous man was so moved by her situation, that he immediately promised the aid she implored, and in a few days actually fulfilled his promise in as gracious a manner as my mother could have wished: he gave her some money and an open letter, commanding that her daughter, wherever she might be found, either in his territories or in Gandshu, whose Chan, Shah-

werdi, was under his authority, should be immediately restored to her, and that no greater ransom should be demanded than she was able to pay. Furnished with this mandate, she resolved to proceed by way of Gandshu to Wagarschapat, and thence to the Turkish frontier town of Achelzich, that being the usual place to which the mountaineers bring their captives for sale, and whence its inhabitants forward them to other Turkish cities and to Egypt. By the way she collected charitable contributions for my ransom; and arriving at Gandshu, she immediately acquainted the Armenians with the nature of her errand, and made inquiries concerning me. She related how, when, and where I was carried off. Some of her auditors spoke in high terms of the generosity of Saphar-Beg, with whom I was, and advised her to go to him and to solicit a gift, which he was sure not to deny especially as his son was at the point of death. My mother followed this counsel, but the attendants whom she first accosted at his house told her she had better apply at once to me; that, as the bride of their young master, I should certainly be liberal of my charity, in hopes of thereby delivering my bridegrom from his disease. I met her at the first door of the harem. Brought up by Saphar-Beg with the care of a father, and in the Mohammedan faith, I not only

never dreamt of meeting with my mother in his house; but, as I was only four years old at the time of our separation, I had totally forgotten her. My master's solicitude for my education had not been in vain; I could read, speak, and write Persian better than even the elders themselves. My mother could not speak with me but in Persian. It might be supposed impossible, or at least extremely difficult for her to recognise her daughter, in a house whither she came only to solicit charity, after the lapse of seven so important years as those between four and eleven; but her heart knew me at the first sight. 'Do I indeed behold thee again,' cried she, 'my dear, my long lost daughter!' Forgetting her condition, forgetting that she had come to beg, she thought of nothing but that it was her daughter to whom she was speaking, not the daughter of an opulent and distinguished man. She embraced me, pressed me to her bosom, bedewed me with her tears, and such was the vehemence of her emotions, that for some minutes she was unable to utter a word. At length with a voice interrupted by sobs she thus resumed: 'Ah, my beloved child! barbarians snatched thee from me; in order to seek thee I have defied dangers, have endured hunger, thirst, and nakedness, and trusting in the aid of the Almighty and of our holy martyr, St. Gregory,

who enlightened us with the Gospel of Christ, I have always believed that I should find thee; and my confidence in the grace and assistance of the Lord our God has not been disappointed. Know that I am thy mother: thou art a Christian; thou hast been purchased from innate sin by the sacred blood of Christ, and by baptism in his name; thou canst not have forgotten that thou hadst a mother, who taught thee to pray in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the essentially one and indivisible Trinity.—Recollect me, my daughter, and thyself, and give not way to the allurements of thy present condition. Here every thing is transient; in the next minute all our temporal prosperity may pass away; follow the example of the blessed martyr, Ripsima*, who refused to become

---

* Agathangel, the historian, secretary to Tiridates, the Zar of Armenia, informs us, that Ripsima, with thirty-seven more Christian virgins, fled from Dioclesian, who was desirous of marrying her, and concealed herself in Armenia. Dioclesian obtaining information of her retreat, wrote to Tiridates, desiring that he would either send Ripsima back to him or take her for himself. Ripsima was discovered, but, agreeably to the exhortation of her elder companion, Canapa, refused to listen to any overtures, and chose rather to suffer martyrdom in the year of Christ 282. All the others suffered with her, excepting Nuna and Mana, who escaped to Georgia, and converted that country to Christianity.—*Author.*

the wife of two mighty monarchs, choosing rather to die for the faith of Christ. Turn then also to the true God thy Lord, and if they would tear thee away from him, prepare thy body for torments, and be not afraid of death itself!' Hereupon she briefly related the deeds of the martyrs who had suffered for Christ, and obtained a crown of glory in the kingdom of Heaven, concluding with these words; 'I hope the poverty of thy mother's appearance and her counsel will not be despised by thee; my heart is rich in love for thee, and in earnest wishes for thy deliverance and happiness.'

"Luckily no one interrupted our conversation for more than a quarter of an hour; nor did any person overhear the sobs and exhortations of my mother. Unconscious of myself I remained motionless in her embrace, without interposing a single word: and then it was all at once as though a thick bandage dropped from my eyes; I beheld a new world, and emotions, to which I had hitherto been a stranger, filled my heart and soul. At that moment the recollection of my infancy was renewed, and I remembered that my mother had taught me to pray in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I embraced and strained her to my breast, while my tears flowed in torrents and mingled with hers. 'I know thee again

mother,' said I, 'and will follow thee. I will prepare my body for torments, and suffer death with joy. Go and quickly made ready what is needful; so long as my betrothed bridegroom is sick, I am free!' After I had given her all the money I had about me, she left me, fearing lest she should be found with me, and lest the latter evil might be worse than the first.

"On quitting me she went straitway to our senior priest, and related to him all that had happened, and where she had found me. He at first replied, that the illustrious Saphar-Beg possessed through his wealth the strength of a lion; that the Chan of Gandshu himself held him in high esteem, and that God alone could deliver me out of his hands. He advised her nevertheless to try her fortune, and to repair to the Chan of Shushi, and implore his aid, for he was a just man, full of compassion for the unfortunate, and had extended his favour and assistance to many under similar circumstances. My mother replied that he had already furnished her with an open letter, on which the good priest thanked God and said: 'I see, my daughter, that God is with thee; go, put thy trust in him; be not afraid of the terrors of the mighty, but pursue thy purpose, and rescue thy daughter from a false religion. The God who worketh miracles and who preserved the three Babylo-

nian captives from the flames, will set thy daughter at liberty, and deliver her from death. Thou wilt meet with difficulties, and even dangers; but defy them all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Fear not death, but rather rejoice if thou art destined to suffer for the faith, and endeavour to confirm thy daughter in the same resolution.' He then cited for her encouragement many examples of holy martyrs of both sexes, concluding with these words: 'Go now, my daughter, to the church; offer up thine ardent prayers to the Lord, and his blessing will be with thee, cooperate with thee, and strengthen thee in the hour of danger!'

"Agreeably to this exhortation my mother went next day to church, heard mass, and then came to our house with a Persian petition addressed to Saphar-Beg.

"This very benevolent man had given orders to all his servants, not to turn away any who should come with petitions to him; my mother had, therefore, no difficulty to obtain access to his apartment. She there fell at his feet and delivered to him her petition, in which she set forth her misery, the manner in which she had lost me, and all the hardships she had suffered in her search after me. She then implored him to permit her to see me, as she had heard that he had in his house a girl of

Armenian extraction, and it was possible this might be her daughter. The letter was couched in brief but pathetic terms; but my master, when he had read it, said with a smile to my mother: 'You are an old Armenian fool. How is it possible that you should know your daughter again after an interval of seven years, when, by your own account, you lost her when she was only four years old?'—My mother, without suffering him to proceed, again fell at his feet, and begged with tears, that he would but permit her to look at me; and if I were her daughter she was confident she should know me immediately, and could describe the marks by which I might be recognized. Saphar-Beg at length yielded to her earnest solicitations, and himself conducted her to the harem. At first he showed her all the young unmarried females who were there, repeating, as he came to each of them, the question: 'Is not that your daughter?' My mother constantly replied in the negative. At length I was shown to her: she paused a moment, fixed her eyes stedfastly on me as if she had not seen me before, and then advanced to embrace me: but she was prevented, and Saphar-Beg desired her to describe what marks I had, that he might be sure of the justice of her pretensions. My mother accordingly described every thing that could serve for a mark

about my body; on which several women were desired to examine me in the presence of my mother, and they reported to my master that she had spoken the truth. Saphar-Beg, however, notwithstanding all his former kindness, would not part from me: he was extremely angry, called my mother an impudent hussy, an impostor; and ordered her to be turned out of doors. For my part, after I had first seen her, I waited with extreme impatience for her second visit, anxious to learn what steps she would take for my liberation; for this reason I desired the attendants to give me immediate notice if any one came to ask alms of my master, and I kept continually on the watch, preparing for whatever might happen, and praying with a wounded heart to God and the blessed martyrs. Hence it was that I saw my mother enter, and heard part of her conversation with Saphar-Beg, and also her entreaties. Imploring the succour of the Almighty, I made up my mind to endure the worst that could happen; and when the attendants, in obedience to Saphar-Beg's orders, were about to turn my mother out of the house, I rushed, beside myself, out of my apartments, crying, in an agony of despair, to Saphar-Beg:— 'Sir, she is really my mother; I know her to be so: I recollect the faith in which I was born, and I believe in the name of the Father, Son, and

Holy Ghost ! Dispose of me as you please, but I will not deny the true God, neither will I forsake my mother, and so am ready like her to endure torments and death for our Saviour Jesus Christ. You destined me for the wife of your son ; but I will not be so—what you think fit to do with me do quickly ; I am ready to die !' This unexpected declaration threw Saphar-Beg into a still more violent passion. 'Why !' cried he, turning to my mother, 'why hast thou presumed, audacious woman, to enter my house, and to cheat this innocent girl ? This is my decision: thou shalt be publicly punished and thrown into the darkest dungeon, where thou shalt not see the light of day, and perish with hunger and thirst !' Accordingly, he gave immediate orders to his servants to tie her hands and to conduct her through the principal streets to the tower of the Chan, and there to shut her up in the darkest hole, till he should himself speak to the Chan ; enjoining them moreover to beat her soundly by the way. Rendered quite frantic by this barbarous command, I cried out to my master that he should not part me from my mother, that I was determined to endure with her any torments he might inflict ; I declared, rather howling than speaking, that I would neither be his servant nor his son's wife, nor would I continue in the dark mazes of his

religion, but was ready to suffer every thing, and even death itself, for the Christian faith. When I, nevertheless, saw my mother seized to be dragged to prison agreeably to his cruel command, I spat in his face: on which Saphar-Beg immediately ordered me to be taken, thrown into the cellar, and there kept without meat or drink, till I should repent my insolent behaviour, and renounce my mother and my intention to follow her.

"Meanwhile his son grew worse and worse, so that his end was evidently at hand. Saphar-Beg was therefore wholly occupied by his anxiety for him, and had not time to think either of my mother or of me. A month passed away and I was still shut up in my cellar, with nothing but the bare ground to lie on, though indeed I was daily supplied with something to eat, and water, and occasionally permitted to go into the apartment. Disagreeable as was my own situation, my thoughts were wholly engaged with my mother; the idea of her sufferings rent my heart, and I should certainly not have been able to bear up so long against this anguish of soul and body, had not my mind been strengthened by the examples of the saints mentioned to me by my mother, and my heart cheered by the conviction, that I, like them, was enduring these sufferings for the sake of Christ

and his holy faith. I prayed continually to God to confirm me in my resolution, and would not listen to persuasions or consolations; nay, I was perfectly insensible to certain indulgences which Saphar-Beg's people allowed me by his command. At length, they came to fetch me out of my prison, and I was conducted into his presence, just at the moment when he had with him several of his most intimate friends. I was secretly informed by some of the servants who were attached to me, that these friends had persuaded him to relax his severity and to employ kindness and gentle means, by which they hoped I should be more easily wrought upon, and brought back to my former sentiments. 'How dreadfully she is altered!' exclaimed Saphar-Beg, as soon as he saw me.— 'Look in the glass, thou wilt not know thyself! Dost thou still think it better to lie upon the ground, to be accounted the daughter of a poor Armenian, and as belonging to a nation which is subject to us, and with which we can do what we please, than to live in abundance, to enjoy my paternal tenderness, and to be a lady? Thou canst not have forgotten, my beloved daughter, that I bought thee of robbers for a slave, but have brought thee up as my own child, and cherished thee in my bosom with all the kindness of a father. I bestowed all possible

pains on thy education, and enlightened thee with our orthodox faith; thou wast always adorned with gold and jewels, and enjoyedst all the good things which a man of my wealth can afford to bestow. Many have sought the happiness of allying their daughters with my only son, but this happiness I reserved for thee. It is all over with him, he now lies almost insensible!' At these words my master was profoundly agitated, and heaving deep sighs he thus continued: 'I shall probably soon lose him for ever! but thou mayst step into his place. I am old and cannot live long myself; thou shalt be sole heir to all my wealth, my name, and my reputation. The woman who has imposed upon thee, and whom thou callest mother, must have already perished in her dungeon, should she be still alive, I will set her at liberty, supply her wants, and make her happy, so thou wilt but return to thy duty, and thankfully receive the benefits I offer thee. The promise that I make thee in the presence of these my friends, I confirm by an oath on this sacred Koran! Now choose which thou preferrest.'—Without a moment's consideration I replied, 'that I well remembered all his kindness to me, for which I was humbly thankful, but that I could no longer avail myself of it; that i wished neither for his wealth nor his fame, but that it was my desire

to remain faithful to the Lord my God, and to die for him; and that no consideration should induce me to renounce my mother and her religion.' Saphar-Beg, filled with indignation at my reply, turned to his friends. 'You see,' said he, 'that kindness has no effect on these unfeeling, ungrateful creatures.' He immediately ordered me to be stripped of my clothes and attired in the coarsest *mitkal*, (a kind of cotton stuff in which the dead are usually dressed): my head was covered with an old rag; and in this state I was led barefoot to my mother's prison. The boys in the street, probably instructed to do so, collected about me crying: 'There goes the old Armenian woman's girl, who has forsaken our holy faith to turn Armenian again!' In this manner I was exposed by the way to all sorts of taunts, which were at times accompanied with blows. I was conducted through the court-yard of the tower and into the Chan's stable, where I was bound to a pillar, and my mother was fetched out of her dungeon and fastened to another. They then began to beat me, one in the face, a second on the head, while a third spat upon me, and all joined in taunts, probably suggested to them for the occasion, and loaded me with all sorts of contumely. I expected that my mother, in pity for my sufferings, would persuade me to comply with the wishes of our

tormentor; she, on the contrary, strove to encourage me to bear them all for the sake of Christ and my eternal salvation. Notwithstanding my youth I was, indeed, firm as a rock, regarding neither the abuse which the populace heaped upon me, nor the blows I received; nay, I was in a manner insensible to all their ill usage. 'Fear not,' replied I calmly to my mother, 'I feel not their tyranny; they cannot shake my resolution.' My mother also had to suffer the most horrible cruelties; and thus did we pass thrice four-and-twenty hours, bound to our pillars, and enduring sometimes one, sometimes another kind of ill treatment from my master's servants. They brought us to eat what people would scarcely offer to dogs; but some compassionate persons secretly supplied us with bread, cheese, and pulse. Our story was already publicly known both to high and low throughout the whole city.

"By an extraordinary dispensation of the Almighty, Saphar-Beg's son, meanwhile, neither recovered, nor could he die, though his disorder seemed incapable of aggravation; all this time, and for more than a month, he lay absolutely motionless between death and life. His father had now given up all hopes of his recovery and wished himself for his release.

His friends possessed greater penetration than he; they repaired to his house and advised him to set us at liberty. 'This disorder of thy son's is a most extraordinary one,' said they: 'it must certainly be a punishment of heaven, and perhaps for the sufferings thou hast inflicted on the Armenian woman and her daughter: set them rather at liberty and make this sacrifice for the alleviation of thy son's condition. God may then perhaps take compassion on him, and not deprive thee of thine only child, whom the death of these unfortunate creatures could not restore to health. Has not the girl already renounced thy wealth, and declared herself firmly resolved to endure thy torments with fortitude for the sake of her religion?—Let her then go in peace. Consider that the whole city knows how thou art torturing two innocent persons to no purpose; thou art thereby losing thy good name; the benefits thou hast heretofore conferred on the unfortunate will be erased from the memory of the people; thou wilt be styled an executioner: thou wilt lose thy son, and wilt have to repent thy equally useless and unjust severity. Try at least the counsel which our sincere friendship and sympathy offer thee. Thou mayst still put them to death, either now or at some future time; but will it not be disgraceful to thee, the most distinguished and the most powerful man in our whole district, to

wreak thy vengeance on two weak helpless females?'—Saphar-Beg at length listened to their counsel, and sent word to the prison that we should be liberated, but conducted bound to him through the public streets. On our return we were again assailed by the jeers of the boys, of which, however, we took no notice. We were led before Saphar-Beg, who was surrounded by his assembled friends. At first, he strove to persuade my mother to relinquish her claim to me, and to advise me to acknowledge him as my father, and to adhere to his religion, in which case he would keep her with him and provide for her declining years. My mother firmly rejected his offers, and positively declared, that his kindness would be as unavailing as his cruelty to overcome her attachment to the holy Christian faith. He then turned to me, and addressing me in the most endearing manner, repeated all his promises; but I persisted in my refusal after the example of my mother. Seeing our obstinacy, he ordered us to be beaten; his servants actually began to scourge us with large rods of *masir* wood, (a kind of shrub which bears red berries, and has thorns like the wild rose). Saphar-Beg seemed in his rage to derive some pleasure from our moans; but his friends, affected by our sufferings, urgently entreated him to desist from his severities. 'Is it then really thy intention to

torture them to death?' said they. 'Thou seest that they have made up their minds to endure every thing, even death itself. They will finally triumph, and thou wilt hereafter be more severely tormented by thy conscience than thou now tormentest them; thou wilt obtain the character of a barbarian, and their blood will cry to God against thee!' These remonstrances of Saphar-Beg's more humane friends and our fortitude shamed rather than affected him. Much against his will, he at length gave orders to his servants to discontinue beating; on which his friends immediately insisted that he should confirm our liberation by a written document, and dismiss us with a present, to make amends as much as possible for his injustice, and that we might not curse him. Saphar-Beg at last complied; he wrote the paper, and immediately ordered all my clothes to be brought and gave them to me, together with one hundred piastres for our subsistence. My mother fell at his feet, thanking him for his bounty. We also made our respectful obeisances to his friends, to whom alone we owed our liberty. He then began himself to beg of us as a favour to remain in his house, and to dispose of every thing in it as we thought fit, or at least not to quit the city. 'I have educated thee as my own child,' said he to me: 'I cannot part with thee; stay in the city as long as I live, that I may have the

satisfaction of seeing and providing for thee.' He certainly expressed the feelings of his heart, at least for the moment; we repeated the assurances of our gratitude with tears, and promised to remain in the city.

"From him we went immediately to the aged priest, who had given my mother such salutary exhortations, and who, as soon as my mother had left him for the purpose of soliciting my dismissal of Saphar-Beg, had hired a Persian of his acquaintance to watch us and to inform him of every thing that should befal us, that he might be able to report it to the patriarch: hence he was apprized of all our sufferings, gave us a joyful welcome, and praised the name of the Lord. It was only the most recent circumstances of which he was not fully informed. He was of opinion, that though Saphar-Beg had dismissed us with apparent kindness, and promised us his protection, yet his good-will might speedily give place to the spirit of revenge, and like a venomous serpent he might again pursue us with the utmost malignity. 'We are in their power,' said he; 'they can treat us as they please; they need but charge you with some crime or other, to involve you in perhaps greater misery than you have yet suffered: to avoid this danger you must depart, the sooner the better, and repair to Wagarschapat where you will be safe; for there the patriarch can protect you

from all their manœuvres.' He accordingly advised us to take lodgings in the house of an Armenian, and not to shew ourselves abroad, till he had found a trusty person to conduct us in safety to the above-mentioned place. Two days afterwards this good priest actually brought us two Armenians whom he had hired to escort us. We waited till night, prayed earnestly with the priest to the Lord our God, and set out on foot accompanied by his blessing. The Armenians were well acquainted with that part of the country, and knew also how to avoid dangers. They conducted us continually along by-ways, lest we should fall into the hands of the Lesgians or other predatory tribes. At night we sought shelter in caverns or ravines, and in the morning pursued our journey, keeping a vigilant watch on every thing that stirred around us. We were twelve days in travelling to Erivan, and thence to Wagarschapat. It was not till we entered the territory of the latter town, that we began to feel ourselves free, and to breathe without apprehension.

"Simeon, the then patriarch, had been informed by the priest of Gaudshu of all that had happened to us. He sent for my mother, received her graciously, and promised her his protection for the future. Out of the hundred piastres given to us by Saphar-Beg, we were enabled to pay our guides handsomely, and had

enough left to live upon for some time. Mean while my mother began seriously to consider of marrying me to some good man, and thus settling me in life. In the same year, a young man from the province of Mush, (a province of Little Armenia, subject to Turkey,) came as a pilgrim to the convent of Etschmiazyn. This young man, named Astwazatur, was skilled in the art of cutting and polishing stones. Simeon, the patriarch, was a lover of the arts, and was desirous of retaining him in the service of the convent; he therefore strove to persuade him to remain at Etschmiazyn, promising that he should be allowed to go from time to time to his native place to visit his parents, and acquainting the latter in writing with this proposal. As soon as he had signified his compliance, the patriarch began to think that if he could find a wife for Astwazatur, he should make the more sure of him. He had promised us his protection; as a compensation, therefore, for our sufferings, he offered me to the young man, who, before the end of the year, became my husband. This husband, who was thy father, built himself a house, and for two years we lived peaceably and happily together; with the exception of one domestic calamity which befel us in the second year, namely, the death of my mother. After the lapse of two years, storms again arose; the robber tribes renewed their incursions, and

internal commotions took place. For this reason the Chan of Erivan, with a view to obviate the danger, commanded us to quit the town, and to remove to the south side of the mountains of Sinak. We collected all the necessaries of life we could, and repaired to Sinak, where we resided about a year, and where thy brother was born. But in the course of this year the insurrection actually broke out; we returned to the town, but such was the devastation we found, that the inhabitants could scarcely distinguish their own houses. Every thing was broken to pieces, burned, destroyed, and nothing to be seen but ruins, and here and there detached walls. Thy father was obliged to build again; but, this time, he erected a very small house. In a little more than two years the monks involved us in fresh troubles. The proximity of the town to the convent furnished them with opportunities for many illicit indulgences, to prevent which the patriarch obtained from the Chan of Erivan permission to remove the town five wersts farther. To some of the poor he gave on this occasion pecuniary assistance. At this new town, after the lapse of nearly two years, thy sister Giriknas was born. Meanwhile thy father, who had never known want or care in the house of his parents, began to be weary of life and became melancholy. His father wrote to him more than once, earnestly intreating him to come

to him with his family, as he wished to enjoy the consolation of seeing him and dying in his presence, promising to provide for all his wants, and to pay his debts, whatever might be their amount. As, however, it was not advisable to take me with him on account of the danger of being attacked and plundered by the way, and he would not, on any account, leave me behind, this circumstance proved an insurmountable obstacle to the fulfilment of the wish of his parents, which, indeed, corresponded with our own, that we would flee to them as to an asylum where we might live in perfect security and content, for his father, who was thy grandfather, was a wealthy man. Care and sorrow meanwhile undermined thy father's health. He fell sick, and it soon became evident that he could not recover. We had none to assist, none to befriend us, or even to speak one word of comfort to our hearts. All our hope rested upon God. I obtained by my labour a scanty subsistence for us; for thy father during the last two years, was incapable of following his work. In the tenth year of our marriage, on the 20th of April 1774, in the evening of the Saturday in the Passion week, thou wast born. Our old men and women regarded the period of thy birth as strange and extraordinary. According to all observations and traditions they were of opinion, that I ought to take a piece

of the shoulder-blade of an animal offered on the first day of Easter,* and fasten it to the back of thy head till the seventh year of thine age, and then, as they predicted, thou couldst not fail to become a very wise and celebrated man. Though I was at this time twenty-two years old, yet I was weak enough to give credit to this flattering and confident prediction of the old folks: fearing at least, just in the way of simple children, lest I might perhaps mar thy prosperity by my neglect, I followed the superstitious direction which they gave with prophetic voice and in an authoritative tone. Such a shoulder-blade was taken, and fastened to thy head; but when about three years had elapsed, I formed a different judgment of the effect of this bone, which I removed and threw into the river. By rights thou shouldst have been baptized on the following day, which was Easter Sunday, but owing to our extreme poverty we could not so speedily make the necessary preparations for the ceremony. Thy father was now so reduced by his illness that he could scarcely walk across the room, and it was some time after thy birth before I regained my strength.† Some of our neighbours, observing

* This can certainly mean nothing else but the paschal lamb.—*Translator.*

† According to our custom a lying-in woman must not go

our situation, rendered us assistance; but I found that their benevolence on this occasion arose from the respect excited by the extraordinary circumstance, as they considered it, of thy birth, and so they had thee baptized on the following, or St. Thomas's Sunday.* On this occasion the priest himself did not fail to congratulate me on thy birth, and to prophesy, like the rest, thy future wisdom and distinction. Thy father continued to grow worse and worse, and three months afterwards, on the 24th of July, he expired, leaving me to endure with you all the misery of extreme indigence. My anguish was the keener, because he was the only friend I had, and when he was taken from me there was none with whom I could share my sorrows. We comforted one another, and thereby cheered each other's spirits, at least for the moment. Thy brother was then seven and thy sister three years old. As soon as I had consigned the remains of thy late father to the earth, I was obliged to consider how I was to support myself, and to bring up you. A second marriage might certainly have

abroad for the space of six weeks, at least not till after sunset, and during this time no person will eat any thing that she has touched or cooked.—*Author.*

* It was on this Sunday, as my mother informed me, that she was set at liberty by Saphar-Beg.—*Author.*

improved my condition, and I might still have entertained hopes of meeting with some old and perhaps wealthy widower, had I possessed more levity, and less affection for you; but I did not suffer myself to be dazzled with such hopes, and should have thought I was sinning against God in marrying a second husband, after living nine years with the first, and having three children by him. God had given me this husband—he loved me and I loved him—God took him from me; but I will cherish my affection for him in my heart as long as I live, and love nothing but you. A stepfather cannot feel such warm attachment to you as your own father; and should there happen to be other children, he might perhaps even begin to hate you. A man marries a widow for her wealth—I have no portion but indigence: for beauty—the bloom of my beauty is gone; it is nipped by trouble and distress, as a flower by the frost: for love—my love is in the grave: for children—I have three already. Thus did I argue with myself, and recollected the bird *kerunk*, and took him for my model. When he has lost his mate, he not only never seeks another, but quits the society of his species. He wanders alone on the shore, pines away and dies. If such constancy is to be found in a creature not endowed with reason and with an immortal soul, how much more ought it to

belong to man, the chief work of the creation, when he doth not debase himself by the opposite failing beneath the brute beasts!

"Thus did I choose the only means of bearing the pressure of my circumstances with patience: I prayed heartily to God to strengthen me in these sentiments, and to grant that I might be able to support myself and you by my labour. In the day-time I wove coverlets; at night I spun cotton; and thus, with the aid of strict economy, I lived with you full five years without suffering any want, and indeed more comfortably than many of our people of property. But, at the expiration of these five years, in 1779, the peace of the inhabitants was once more disturbed. Heraklios, Zar of Georgia, demanded tribute of the Chan of Erivan, who refused it, on which Heraklios assembled an army for the purpose of attacking Erivan. As soon as he arrived in the vicinity of the Ararat, Simeon, the patriarch, went to the village of Aschtarak (about forty wersts from Wagarschapat) to meet him, and exerted all his powers of persuasion to divert him from his purpose, representing that it was not worth while, on account of the tribute demanded by him and refused by the Chan, to involve himself in a war, which would cost a great deal of money, and the lives of many thousands of men; that he would employ all possible means to induce the

Chan to comply with his requisition, and had strong hopes of success. Heraklios, however, would not listen to any thing. The inhabitants of eight of the most opulent Armenian towns fled to Baiasit, beyond the Turkish frontiers, and the rest, being Christians, joined Heraklios. At the village of Parakar the patriarch again offered his mediation, but again without effect. Heraklios continued his hostilities; he cannonaded the fortress, but this was so far from frightening the Persians, that they answered him with taunts from the walls. Heraklios had rejected the advice of the patriarch, and now he was compelled to abandon his enterprize. The approach of winter threatened the destruction of his whole army by cold and hunger. This failure enraged him to the highest degree, and he revenged himself for it on the Armenians, though they had reposed on him all their hopes of deliverance from the Persian yoke, and therefore manifested the utmost zeal in his cause, nay, even made themselves rebels to their own sovereign. Not content with plunging into misery those only who had staid in their villages, he sent some of his officers to the fugitives who had fled to Baiasit, to persuade them to return home; prevailed on the patriarch to pledge himself that he had entered their country with no other view than to set them at liberty; that he

had nothing so much at heart as their welfare, to which he was determined to pay the utmost attention; they might therefore lay aside all apprehension, and return to their habitations. The unfortunate people, relying on the plighted faith of the patriarch, in whom they placed the strongest confidence, returned to their homes, but only to become the victims of the most atrocious cruelty. With the exception of our town and some of the adjacent villages, whose inhabitants had shut themselves up for safety in the fortress of the convent of Etschmiazyn, built by direction of the patriarch Simeon, all the others were demolished or burned, after being pillaged of the property they contained; and the people, both rich and poor, were carried away captives to Tiflis, where Heraklios divided them among his princes. But this was not all: the Persians themselves in all their depredations never touched the holy places, and respected the temples—whereas the army of Heraklios destroyed and plundered all the convents and churches on the mountains of Ararat and in other parts, and that so effectually, that nothing was left of them but the bare walls. The patriarch Simeon had admitted the inhabitants of Wagarschapat within the walls of his convent, and begged Heraklios not to destroy our town, promising to comply with all his demands,

which he actually did. Besides many other contributions, Heraklios received considerable sums of money; and by such sacrifices only did the patriarch rescue us from the misery experienced by all the other Armenians, and the like to which they had never yet suffered from all the incursions and depredations of the Lesgians, and the other banditti of the mountains.

"Most of the prisoners whom Heraklios dragged away with him were in the most wretched plight; they had neither clothes nor shoes, having been stripped of every thing. Many perished with hunger by the way; many escaped by flight after their arrival at Tiflis; some had lands allotted to them, but in places where they were most exposed to depredations; and others were distributed among the Georgian princes and nobles, who hold them in bondage, and not unfrequently oppress them even to despair.

"The consequences of this devastation were most deplorable: the fields remained uncultivated, and such was the dearth for two successive years, that the rich as well as the poor were reduced to extreme misery, and compelled to subsist upon herbs, while many died of hunger. The heart of Simeon, the patriarch, was deeply affected by this distress of the people. The extreme misery of the wretches perishing before his face, the loss of all they possessed,

and the desolation of the temples of God, filled him with profound grief. His superior intelligence and his indefatigable efforts seemed to have established the prosperity of the Armenian nation on a solid foundation: all his energies were directed to this point, and the people already enjoyed in full measure the benefits of his truly pastoral guidance: but the Zar Heraklios annihilated all in a single hour, and as it were with one blow. Traces of pillage, misery, and desolation, were every where to be seen; and the few survivors resembled shadows rather than men. It was evident to all how deeply the heart of the patriarch was afflicted, because he could not satisfy the wants of a whole nation, and alleviate its severe lot. To this calamity was superadded another circumstance which was extremely painful to our patriarch, namely, that some of our nation, having forsaken the faith of their fathers, as established at the council of Nicæa, and turned Papists or Jesuits, now strove to seduce the weak by their sophistries, whose sole aim was deception and the love of gain, to lure the simple country-people out of the right way.

"Grief at length consumed the powers of his body and soul, and in eight months put a period to his life. The remains of this worthy pastor were deposited with those of the other patri-

archs in the convent of the blessed martyr, St. Kaiana, and universal lamentations attended his obsequies. By this loss our calamities were inexpressibly aggravated: the people lost in him their only support, an able defender, and the most zealous champion of our faith.*

"After his decease, the archbishop Luka, of the city of Karin (in Turkish, Arsrum), was seated in the patriarchal chair: thou wast then in thy eighth year. I was resolved to exert myself to the utmost to have thee taught to read and write, and to obtain admission for thee into the ecclesiastical order, that in time thou mightst become a servant in the church, and

* The patriarch Simeon may, in truth, be styled, with Gregorios the Fourth, *the Enlightener.* He revised and re-arranged the church service, which was previously in great confusion, owing to many omissions and chasms in the manuscripts; he corrected the former errors by means of his printing-press: the church-registers directed to be kept by him will preserve constant order, and attest not only his superior talents, but also his perfect devotedness to the service of God and of the church. In like manner, he was indefatigably attentive to the welfare of the people, procured himself the requisite artists, encouraged every useful work, and promoted it to the utmost of his power.—*Author.*

All the Armenians with whom the translator ever conversed on the subject have confirmed this honourable testimony. They all spoke of Simeon's patriarchate as of the golden age of Armenia.—*Translator.*

pray to God for the remission of the sins of thy parents; hoping also that thou wouldst be a support to me in my old age, and be able to maintain thy brother and sister. I went therefore, to our neighbour, the bookbinder to the convent, and implored him with tears to undertake to teach thee to read. He cheerfully complied with my request, but it was with great difficulty that I procured the boards* necessary for thine instruction. Thou wast very diligent in learning, and in a year hadst made such progress as to be able to read very fluently, and to answer most of the questions of the Catechism from memory. Hence thou becamest noted in the place; and all envied thee, more especially because thou, the son of a poor widow, couldst do this, while the children of our rich people did not even learn to read. Karapet, the alderman of our village, was indeed a good man, but

* Among us, children learn the alphabet by means of a board of walnut-tree wood, on which the teacher forms the letters with colours. Money is not paid for such instruction; but, on great festivals, the parents take care to make the master as handsome a present as their circumstances permit. The pupil, on the other hand, performs all sort of menial offices like a slave. Upon the whole, teachers conduct themselves in a very arbitrary manner toward their scholars, frequently punishing them in a very tyrannical, nay, almost inhuman manner.—*Author.*

almost the only one who was favorably disposed towards thee: he approved my plan, rejoiced at thy progress in learning, and afforded us his protection.

"There was, nevertheless, a tithing-man, whose son had no capacity whatever but for the rudest labours of the field: he sought very often out of spite to take thee from thy learning, and to send thee to work. How often was I compelled to place myself on a level with children. I performed in thy stead the task that would have been allotted to thee, that thou mightst not be interrupted in thy studies. But when to our misfortune Karapet, our protector, died, Kalust, the priest, who at that time presided over our village, a cruel man, whose heart was full of wickedness and malice, appointed Sagak, a fellow impenetrably stupid, to be Karapet's successor. He rose betimes every morning to go to the assembly, merely to prate whatever came into his head, and to abuse those whom he thought he might outrage with impunity. The other elders (*starschines*) and wealthy people of our village were not a whit, or at least very little better; in short they had neither good manners nor sound discretion. Once, while I was performing thy work, being grossly insulted by the tithing-man, I went and preferred my complaint to Sagak, and implored him to protect me and

my orphans from oppression. 'Why dost thou not get thyself a husband?' cried he, adding an opprobrious epithet, and driving me from his presence.

"Thus did I patiently endure every hardship and affront so I could but defend thee from injury. I gleaned in the fields, worked day and night to procure you sustenance, putting up with stripes, and taunts, and jeers, in confident expectation of future comfort; for I thought within myself, that when thou shouldst be qualified to read in the church I should be treated with some respect by our people, and thou wouldst enjoy peace and consideration. The wretches have, however, robbed me of this last hope, and their rancour and malignity are, as thou seest, only augmented. They are bent on thy ruin: all thou canst do is to rely on the protection of the Almighty, and to flee from this place. Take this cross, put on the hair garment of the hermits, and seek thyself a retreat. I can do no more for thee than pray that God may grant thee patience, and cause thee, notwithstanding thy poverty,* to gain admission into

* Among us, it is almost impossible for a poor man to obtain admission into a monastery. Into these institutions they receive none but the rich, or persons bringing recommendations from the wealthy—which I was not fortunate enough to possess.—*Author*.

some convent or other. Be not weak in thy confidence in God, and tread in the footsteps of Christ our Redeemer, who says: 'Whosoever doth not leave father and mother for my sake is not worthy of me.'

"I have related the events of my life to thee, that the sufferings which I and my mother endured for the love of God, and the succour which he afforded in delivering us from such manifold distress, may serve as an example to thee, and strengthen thee in the assurance, that God is still the mighty one. He can lift up the fallen, recall the dead to life, and raise children to Abraham out of stones. We are formed of earth, and to earth we must one day return. Our life passeth away as a shadow, or as the running water, and with it too all our sorrows pass away. Our present state is a pilgrimage, a journey; and those who here sow in tears, shall reap in eternity a harvest of joy. Wish for nothing but patience, and seek no other consolation from thy faith than love to, and confidence in God: be faithful unto death, and expect thy reward only in a future life. Be not angry when fate presses heavily upon thee. God punishes those who do injury, and will one day reward thine innocence. Remember my admonitions; take my fortunes and my sufferings for thy guide: imprint them on thy me-

mory and on thy heart. Preserve the Christian faith in which thou hast been educated: this is my testament to thee; if thou keepst it, thou wilt be blessed in the sight of God!"

Thus did my mother conclude her narrative: she covered me with ardent kisses, pressed me to her heart, and did not cease to exhort me to put my trust in God. I drank my tears, if I may so express myself, while she was speaking, and my brother and sister wept no less than I did. In this manner we passed the evening, till midnight overtook us. Next morning before it was quite light, my mother heard a knocking at the door, and recognised the voice of the tithing-man, who had been directed by the alderman to keep an eye on me. From this early visit she augured nothing good, and therefore did not admit him till she had softly let me out into the back-yard and hidden me under dry cow-dung, which we are accustomed to collect in our country as fuel for the winter. As he entered the room he enquired for me. "He is gone to his master," replied my mother. She had in fact not long before sent me secretly for instruction to another good man, because, while I was under my former teacher, people had been constantly lying in wait to seize me and drag me away to labour. The tithing-man knew nothing of this change, and therefore went to

our neighbour's, but not meeting with me there, he returned to the alderman, and reported that I was no where to be found. No sooner was he gone from our house than my mother dispatched me to my new master. This excellent man had witnessed the treatment I had received the preceding evening, and felt great compassion for me: but knowing the old grudge borne me by our opulent people and elders, he hid me, on the slightest intimation that I was sought or waylaid, beneath cow-dung, or among hay in the stable. This time, however, he committed a great oversight in sending me home to dinner, under the idea that every one would then be at table with his family, so that I might go and return without danger. The event was very different. The alderman, enraged at the report of the tithing-man, commanded him, with a threat of punishment, to seek me immediately, and to bring me before him. His own danger compelled him to consider a little. He waited till dinner-time, and then came again to our house to look about him, and this time, unfortunately for us, he had calculated rightly. Though I had made all possible haste I had not finished my dinner when he abruptly entered the room, and espying me, he cried:—"Ha! have I caught thee; wait a moment, we will give thee instruction in our manner."

He then upbraided us for the danger of punishment which he had himself incurred on my account; slapped my face, beat me with his stick, and told me that in future I might expect frequent chastisement from his hand. My poor mother, who had not the power to protect me, could do nothing but tell him with tears, that she wished to God his children might be treated in the same manner; that they might be left orphans without protection, and oppressed as cruelly as her unfortunate younger son, her Artemi. On hearing these words the tithing-man loosed his hold of me, turned to her, struck her repeatedly in the face, seized her by the hair, dragged her about, and asked how she durst use such insolent language to him; telling her, if she was determined to indulge her son and to make a scholar of him, she must do all the work he should set her; and ordering her to take the *tagutshak*,* and to follow him with me to the alderman. My mother earnestly implored him to spare us and to allow her a respite, at least for that day, since she could not, on any account, then leave her young children and her house, promising to finish what she

* An iron instrument fastened to a handle five or six feet long, used for hoeing up the weeds that grow between the cotton-plants.—*Author.*

had to do at home and go to work the following day: but neither her tears, nor the sobs of my brother and sister, had the least effect on this scum of humanity. He compelled my mother to follow him, and again seized her by the hair. Her patience forsook her: she lost her temper, and with her *tagutshak* gave the tithing-man such a blow on the head that the blood began to flow. He, who was naturally savage, now became quite furious; he beat her almost to death, and threw her senseless into the street: but not yet satisfied, instead of returning to the alderman, he proceeded straightway to Kalust, the supreme director of the village, and charged my mother with disobedience, inasmuch as she would neither go to work herself nor send her children, but merely thought of making scholars of us, as she had put one son to learn cotton-weaving, and the other reading and writing. Kalust was then in his *kali*, a kind of shed in which the people of our country clean wheat. At his command, six of his servants went and dragged my mother by the hair before him. No sooner did Kalust set eyes on her, than, crying out with brutal ferocity, he asked, how she durst oppose the tithing-man and show disobedience to his orders, though he was the supreme director of the whole place; and who had exempted her

from the performance of the same labour as the rest, and authorized her to think of nothing but making scholars of her children. My mother, quite dejected in spirit and languid in body, was still scarcely able to speak; she answered him, however, in the mildest manner: "Gracious Sir, (so she styled him, who had no more grace or mercy than a tiger,) I am a poor widow; I have nothing but what I earn by my labour; I have no succour, no protection, not even one to give me good advice. My children are young, they can yet earn nothing. If I were to go every day to work for you I should get but two *paras* a day, and in the present dearth that sum would not buy bread enough to satisfy our hunger. I am a lone woman, and there is none to bring them bread, or to look after them and the house in my absence. Have compassion on me and my children, grant me some indulgence till they have attained a proper age, and then our joint efforts shall compensate for what I alone am not now able to perform for you." This petition she concluded with a complaint against the tithing-man. Kalust eyed her with a truly infernal smile, and instead of being moved by her complaint to do her justice and to afford her his protection, which in such a case ferocious beasts them-

selves would not deny, if they understood the language of men, he loaded her with abuse, befitting neither his vocation nor the sex of my mother; and to punish her audacity in vindicating herself, he, in the most cold-blooded manner, ordered a very stout man to be called, and *kærmasses* to be brought. The *kærmass* is a pliant shrub, not thicker than one's finger, of which the tubes of pipes are made: its twigs when steeped in oil become as flexible as a riding-whip and will not break. His commands were instantly obeyed. They brought a sturdy boor, who laying hold of my mother by the hands, hoisted her upon his shoulders, upon which others beat her till her voice failed, and all her clothes were soaked in blood. I had followed her, and of course witnessed this exercise of tyrannic cruelty. My readers may conceive what I suffered; for, far as the sun shines, can more atrocious cruelty be practised on human beings! Is it not worse than when savages, who, in their whole way of life, are more like brutes, devour their enemies?

At length, glutted with her blood, they dragged my mother back by the hair to our house. Her life was in such danger from this usage, that the holy sacrament was administered to her the same day. In this critical state she continued for a whole month, but

it was three months before she could leave her bed. During this period, my brother, my sister, and myself, were driven out every day to work. Some of our neighbours, feeling for the sufferings of my mother and pitying us unfortunate orphans, came and attended to our domestic matters, which it was impossible for us to do. But notwithstanding my youth and the fatigue which I had to go through every working-day in the week, I stole away on Sunday to my master and continued my lessons. At this time our family was almost wholly supported by me. Whenever I was at church, after I had learned to read, I paid particular attention to the order of the service; and having a good memory, I knew much of it by heart. The priests liked me for my cleverness. In going to and from work I called sometimes on one and sometimes on another, and they gave me bread, cheese, and occasionally money. They also took me with them to funerals, christenings, and other official duties. On these occasions I assisted as sub-deacon,* and actually derived some emolu-

* *Djutshok*, the diminutive of *djak*, which is the official appellation of the assistant priest, who is not yet qualified to perform the service of the church, but in larger congregations assists the acting priest in the performance of it.

ment from the office; at the same time it happened not unfrequently, that the money which I received for my labour in the fields, and sometimes even the wages of ten days, was taken from me, and that by command of our rich people and superiors. When they knew, for example, that any one was going home with money, they ordered a tithing-man to detain him, and under pretext that his cow or other beast had got into their fields and eaten their corn, they demanded compensation for the damage. Such was the way in which they treated the poor.

My mother had begun with difficulty to crawl about the room, when Arivas, an Armenian merchant of the city of Astabat, in the Persian province of Nachitshewan, died in our village, whither he had come on commercial business. As he had no heirs among us, Luca the patriarch, availing himself of the prerogative of the convent, sent the archimandrite Karapet, to take possession of his property after

In this degree he must have a wife, and in case of her death, he cannot become an actual priest, but must go into a convent and turn monk. The ecclesiastic marries as *djatshok*, before he is ordained a deacon, assists the deacon in reading, singing, and other clerical duties, in large congregations; and in smaller, officiates as his substitute.—*Translator.*

his interment, and to remove it to the monastery. I watched my opportunity, and when there was no person besides the ecclesiastics in the church, I went in, read psalms for the deceased, and sung what was suitable, while the archimandrite was holding the *panichidion*, or the service performed, according to the canons of the church, over the dead. He remarked my fluency, inquired who I was? what my parents were? and whether I was willing to enter his service and be admitted into the convent? I answered his inquiries, accepted his offer to take me with him into the convent with joy, and kissed his hand: I then went home and related the circumstance to my mother. She was overjoyed at the news, and thanked God with tears for bestowing such luck on her darling son. After the funeral, Karapet conversed with the patriarch concerning me and my talents, and solicited his permission to take me into the convent. The patriarch granted his request; I was fetched in a few days, received my mother's benediction, and was placed at Karapet's disposal. I was then ten years old.

Karapet was a native of the city of Arapker, in the Turkish dominions. In my then situation he certainly conferred on me the highest favour, but I consider myself bound to speak

the truth of him, without, however, violating the respect and gratitude which I owe to his memory, and with which I still remember him. He was a very good man, at least in this respect better than many others. As far as I could observe he was not at all addicted to the vanities of this world. No passion disturbed the tranquillity of his soul, but he was exceedingly fond of good and savoury cheer. I too, for my part, knew no want, and live well, but my education was totally neglected. I did nothing particular for Karapet, nor was I instructed in any thing, but to cook his victuals: sometimes I occupied myself in reading the Holy Scriptures, and as I had many leisure hours, I wrote a circumstantial narrative of my mother's history and adventures. The inhabitants of Arapker, Karapet's native town, use a great number of singular and many of them ludicrous expressions, and they are extremely partial to spices in their food. They cook scarcely a single dish without wild pepper. Karapet employed the same expressions, and had his victuals as highly seasoned as the rest of his townspeople. I was often surprised that such hot ingredients did not consume his intestines; for the mere tasting of them would burn the skin from my lips, and the very smell overpowered me. The other archimandrites and inmates of the convent often

laughed at his language and his dishes, and I, as his servant, came in for a share of their jeers; but with this exception, I lived two years with him contented and happy. At the expiration of that time, Karapet was sent on the business of the convent to Baiasit, in Kurdustan. He would not leave me with any one in the monastery; but, with the patriarch's permission, he placed me with Gabriel, the senior protopope of our town, who was to board me, to continue my education, and to take care of me, for which he promised, on his return, to pay him with due thanks. The protopope proved himself not the most worthy of his confidence. He was one of those whose hearts are hard and devoid of feeling. Instead of instructing me, he kept me mostly to work, as indeed other teachers did; and when he set me a task, if in repeating it by heart, I made one blunder, even were it but in a single word, he punished or rather tortured me, as well as his other scholars, without mercy. Besides a more severe beating than a good master would inflict on his cattle, he shut us up in his hen-house or stable for two days together, without giving us a morsel to eat. Thus I had to endure many severities from this priest for nearly two years, till the return of the archimandrite, my benefactor.

During this interval, in the year 1785, that is

to say, three years after the return of Heraklios from the frontiers of Erivan, Omar, Chan of the Lesgians assembled an army of about 30,000 men, and overran Georgia. On his march through the provinces and towns, he came to the village of Madan, where there were springs of gold and silver. The Zar Heraklios fortified some of his places, marched against the Lesgians, and had in his army three hundred Russians, who were most excellent troops. He advanced to the village of Sadachlo, which is about a league and a half distant from Madan. The Armenians, Georgians, and Greeks, of the nearest towns, fled with their families and property to the fortress of Madan, that they might jointly defend themselves against the Lesgians. The people, chiefly Greeks, dwelling round about the springs in Madan itself, paid Heraklios a tribute of gold, silver, copper, and lead; they therefore besought him to make haste to protect them from the attack of the enemy; but Heraklios did nothing more than approach within half a league of Madan, for the purpose of dispatching Ophtandil, one of his officers, to Omar, in order to make peace with him. The commander of the little Russian corps begged permission to attack and disperse the Lesgians with his three hundred men; but Heraklios refused it, alleging that it was not yet time. The Lesgians mean-

while stormed Madan, cut in pieces great numbers of people, carried off the rest with all their property and effects to the Turkish city of Achelzeg, and then marched upon the fortress of Bacham. Heraklios, on receiving this intelligence, seemed inclined to oppose Omar's progress, and divided his army not far from the besieged fortress, but again undertook nothing: the Lesgians, on the other hand, reduced the fortress, slew no small number of people, and carried the rest into captivity. Chan Omar remained the whole winter at Achelzeg, and then returned through the province of Erivan. On his march through the village of Aschtarak, he seized a number of Armenian gardeners, put some to death, and carried others away with him to the Turkish city of Shushi, whence he returned to his own place. During these troubles, many from our village of Aschtarak, and our family among the rest, fled to the fortified city of Erivan, where they remained about two months.

After Karapet's return I was again removed to the convent. It would have availed me nothing to have complained of the protopope Gabriel, for I knew that it was not in Karapet's power to revenge me on him: I could therefore but rejoice at an event which delivered me from his wicked clutches. Great care was now bestowed on me in the convent. I was diligently

taught to sing the church choruses for eight voices; I could already repeat the whole Acts of the Apostles by rote, and many of the ecclesiastics, remarking the progress which I made, chiefly owing to my good memory, were angry that I should be with Karapet, who could teach me nothing but the art of cookery according to his peculiar taste. Thus passed another year, in which I had no serious vexations at least to endure; but, in September 1787, on a Saturday, being the eve of the festival of the elevation of the cross, a very painful circumstance occurred to me.

I had not noticed, that in the church-regulations, a different anthem was prescribed for this occasion, and made a blunder in the evening service, by commencing the usual strophes; nor did I correct myself till the second chorus began to be sung. Karapet himself had not at all times his wits about him, and would probably have committed the same blunder that I had; he was, nevertheless, extremely angry with me. On quitting the church he overtook me, caught me furiously by the arm, and dashed me with such violence against the flag-stones with which the way was paved, that I lay quite insensible, as I was afterwards told, for above an hour, till some other persons, hearing of the circumstance, came and carried me in their arms to his cell.

The blood had started from my eyes to such a degree that I was quite blind for three days; all my fingers were smashed, and I was bathed as it were in blood. My mother, when she was informed of this accident, regardless of the rule which forbids women access to the convent, excepting twice a year at stated times, forced her way in, came to our cell, and was nearly driven to despair, when she beheld me in such a state, that I was scarcely to be recognized. She abused Karapet, called him and the monks tigers and monsters; adding, that she had not brought up her son, and suffered such distress and misery on his account as she had done, merely for them to kill him; she insisted that I should be delivered back to her as sound as he had received me; in short, she made a great uproar in the convent. All this was instantly reported to the patriarch, who gave orders that my mother should be turned out of the convent without ceremony, and not again admitted; and Karapet was severely reprimanded. My mother, agonized with grief, and filling the air with her sighs, went round the walls of the convent till she sunk down exhausted, as she afterwards informed me; for I then lay insensible, and was confined at least three months to my bed. Meanwhile pains were taken for my recovery; my eyes soon got well; plasters were put on my

hands, and all my fingers healed but one. In order to ascertain the cause of this, they applied to it the flesh of the fish *karmirachait*, which is delicate eating, and used as an external remedy, has the effect of eating away the flesh without putrefaction and almost without pain, so as to lay the bones and nerves completely bare. It was then discovered that the fore-finger of the left hand was broken at the joint, and the sinews injured. Inquiry was made for a bone-setter, and I was sent under the care of some of the people of the convent to Erivan, to Revas, the Armenian, who resided in the Armenian village of Kond, which signifies high hill. Revas was agent there to the convent, a skilful workman in copper and silver, who was also versed in other arts—a very clever man, and whose acquirements were not of the superficial kind. When I arrived at his house, I was still so weak, that I could not stand on my legs without holding by something. I was to go forty wersts farther to Gerch-Bulach, where a very eminent bone-setter then dwelt. The road almost the whole way was over mountains, and exceedingly toilsome. Revas took a liking to me, and wishing to spare me the fatigue, wrote to the man, desiring him to come to Erivan; but he was old and would not undertake the journey, especially as the road was infested by robbers. For this reason

I passed above a month at Erivan, during which I received the most flattering attentions from Revas and the visitors who frequented his house. At length, my health being sufficiently restored, and the road being cleared of robbers, Revas dispatched me to Gerch-Bulach with some of his own people. My finger had already knitted, but in the bone-setter's opinion, not properly: he therefore deemed it expedient to break it afresh, in order to make a more complete cure. This plan he actually carried into execution while I was asleep. On the sudden feeling of such horrid agony I was so terrified, that it is to be ascribed solely to the goodness of Divine Providence, that I did not entirely lose my reason. The bone-setter was certainly a skilful man in his profession; but he was not very successful with my finger, and instead of curing it he only made it worse than it was. It got well however, in time, and I returned to Revas, with whom I wished to remain. By command of the patriarch people were sent to fetch me away, but I refused to return with them, declaring that after the tyrannical treatment I had experienced, I would not stay any longer in the convent. I was sent for a second time and removed by force. On our return, we passed through the village of Parakar; on an adjacent hill is found steatite, which is used by poor

people instead of soap. On my arrival at the convent, I was asked whether I would remain there, and returned the same answer as before. The reverend fathers then took it into their heads to extort my consent by violence. They ordered me to be beaten on the soles of the feet with small sticks. This is a common punishment among us, and is not unfrequently inflicted with such severity, that the sufferer is deprived of speech and sense. It is called *falach*, and is executed as follows: At an equal distance from each end of a long pole, is attached a cord in the form of a noose, into which are put the legs of the person to be punished, and these are fastened so tightly to the pole that he cannot stir them, which of itself occasions violent pain. The sufferer is laid on his back on the floor or ground; two men, holding the ends of the pole, lift it breast-high, while a third strikes the soles of the feet. While they were thus beating me, they asked from time to time, whether I would stay in the convent: but I was firmly resolved to endure every thing, and to renounce the monks. In this manner I parted from their reverences, and thanked God that I was not tortured to death. I was thrust ignominiously out of the convent, and returned to my mother at Wagarschapat. This happened in the spring of 1788, in the month of May, which

with us is the finest season in the year. I was then fourteen years old.

The directing hundred-man, the tithing-man, and the other knaves, rejoiced exceedingly on finding that I was again in their power. The day after my arrival the tithing-man came very early in the morning, before we had risen, to fetch me to work. I was at first employed in digging wells, by means of which the water is conducted from elevated situations or hills to irrigate the fields. These wells and the aqueducts leading from them to the desired spots are so solid, from the extreme tenacity of the soil, which is every where a stiff clay, that they may be called imperishable works. With these and various other laborious occupations I was harassed almost every day, excepting Sunday, for two successive years. Previously to wheat-sowing I had to disturb the water, and after the seed was in the ground to drive away the birds; I helped to sow cotton, pruned vines, threshed corn, cut straw, in short assisted in all the operations of agriculture. Besides this, in summer, I was usually sent into the fields to tend oxen and buffaloes, and was obliged to pay the utmost attention to prevent their eating the herb *junsha*, which is sown on purpose. This herb is cut thrice a year, and not used for fodder but when dry;

for if the cattle eat it green, it swells and bursts them in less than an hour. But on Sundays and whenever else I could spare time, also after I had done work, I went secretly to my second master to receive instruction, and to the priests, whom I assisted in the performance of their various spiritual duties, by which I occasionally earned some money. Thus two years passed away, at the end of which my master began to try to introduce me again into the convent, for the purpose of learning the trade of a bookbinder. He commended my talents, and represented the indispensable necessity of bringing up some one to the business, of which himself and my first teacher were the only masters. In consequence of this representation I was taken into the convent by command of the patriarch as an apprentice. This change greatly rejoiced my poor mother, and likewise my brother and sister, but was a mortification to our enemies. I now went every day to the convent with my master, and learned to bind books. Besides excellent and plentiful fare, of which I partook at the general table with the masters and their apprentices and journeymen, I was paid thirty *paras* a month. The table was divided into two parts: at the one sat the ecclesiastics, at the other the masters and work-people, in

all about three hundred persons, though frequently, when there were many pilgrims, the number was not less than five hundred, exclusively of those who were obliged to perform husbandry labour for the convent, and for whom a separate table was kept. Thus I was very comfortable the whole summer, but in winter there was no work. One day while I thus went to the convent in summer, it so happened, that I witnessed a very extraordinary occurrence. One of the pilgrims, a wealthy Armenian merchant, gave all the inmates of the monastery a dinner, at which I also was present. According to the rules of this establishment, no person is allowed to speak a word during dinner, but all must listen to a sermon or considerations on a passage of Scripture, which one of the ecclesiastics reads from the pulpit. Thus too, on the present occasion, an appropriate discourse, concluding with warm commendations of the devotion and pious zeal of the above-mentioned merchant, was read. One of the archimandrites, who had not long before returned to the convent from an official mission abroad, conversed during the delivery of this discourse with his neighbour. The archbishop mildly observed to him that he would afterwards have plenty of time for conversation; but the archimandrite, regardless

of this admonition, continued talking as before. After dinner the archbishop communicated this act of disobedience to the patriarch, and the poor archimandrite was sentenced to the discipline of the *falach*, during the infliction of which the archbishop said to him: "Now you are at liberty not only to talk, but to shout as much as you please." This *falach* lasted, as usual, a considerable time, and ended with the archbishop's crying out to the almost insensible archimandrite: "Well, why are you now so silent? why don't you speak?"

Returning home the same day in a melancholy mood, in consequence of this event, I was met by a stranger on horseback. Observing my gloomy and dejected look, he inquired, with the sympathy of a humane mind, who I was? whence I came? whither I was going? and why I was so thoughtful? I attributed the gloom, which he could not help noticing, to my situation. When he was informed that I was a poor orphan, and was learning the trade of bookbinding in the convent, he begged me to procure for him the church-regulations of the late patriarch Simeon, promising to pay me with a sheep and a horse instead of money. From this liberal promise I concluded that he was a rich and a good man, and merely desired me to get him the regu-

lations that he might confer a benefit on me. He followed me to the village, and when I had shown him our house, he told me that he would come in a few days for the regulations. My mother, observing nothing suspicious in him, formed the same opinion of him as myself. The stranger, though he had received nothing of me, brought me, next evening after dark, a couple of sheep, saying, that having had business to transact not far off, he thought he might as well perform part of his promise, and at the same time reminded me of mine. I gave him immediately a few sheets, which I had partly found in the printing-office among soiled printed paper, and which partly belonged to the overplus or waste; assuring him that I would look up the remainder to complete a copy for him without delay. There was not more than half wanting; these sheets I could not find any where, but I was, nevertheless, bound to fulfil my promise. I had no other means to extricate myself from this dilemma than to take the deficient sheets out of some perfect copies, each of which sold for six rubles, to earn which sum in an honest way, I must have worked in the convent for at least two years. I made up my mind, therefore, to the commission of this theft, and that with the less difficulty, because

the loss would scarcely be felt by the convent; whereas, to a poor creature like myself, the acquisition of sheep and a horse was of the highest importance. When the stranger returned I delivered to him the remaining sheets with joy. He was perfectly satisfied, and the same night brought a third sheep in a sack. This time either his behaviour or his generosity awakened some suspicion in my mother. She ventured to ask, why he had brought the sheep in a sack? "Because," replied he, "a good sack may be useful to you for various purposes, and therefore I expressly desired my people to look out such a one." From the words "my people," we knew that he was a priest, and my mother was now perfectly satisfied. Next day, however, a report reached our village that the priest of Merk-Kulap had quitted his post, and that orders had been given to apprehend him wherever he might be found, as it was known that this priest had turned robber. My mother then conceived a violent mistrust of the stranger, and was so imprudent as to relate all that had happened, but without mentioning the regulations, because she knew nothing about them. She was severely censured for not having given earlier information concerning him; but, God be praised! this affair passed off without

any farther unpleasantness to us. The stranger, nevertheless, kept his word, and very soon sent me an excellent horse. From the man who brought him we learned that he was actually the priest of the village of Merk-Kulap, who was already known to us by report, and who, from the spear which he always carried with him, was surnamed Msrach. My mother, apprehensive of danger, refused to accept the horse, but the man who brought it persuaded her that she had nothing to fear, and that the priest made her heartily welcome to this present. I, for my part, insisted that the horse was sent for me, and that I had an undoubted right to accept it as the voluntary gift of a benevolent man. For this generous priest, as for every other, these regulations were an essentially necessary article; but it is not an easy matter for every one to pay six rubles for them. Msrach certainly did commit depredations; but this man, with an excessively ardent, impetuous, and in some respects vindictive disposition, unlike other thieves, by his robberies avenged, as it were, the poor on the rich, and succoured the former, as far as lay in his power, with what he took from the latter; as if to restore to them a portion of those good things which the wealthy had engrossed. The inhabitants of the village of Merk-Kulap, who were in a state of abject in-

digence, he assisted to the utmost. If he met with a poor man on the road, he accompanied him till he was in a place of safety; and if he learned from him that he was in urgent distress, he relieved him to the extent of his ability. He reserved but little of his booty for his personal use, and never had any superfluity, but distributed nearly the whole among the unfortunate who fell in his way. In many of the villages the poor blessed him for his benevolence. According to the regulations of the Armenian church, every Armenian ecclesiastic, who has to hold high mass, must previously confess his sins to another priest: now it happened several times that Msrach desired to be confessed, but the other priests to whom he applied reproached him with his misdeeds; on which he compelled them by fear to comply, and extorted absolution by threatening them with his vengeance. But, notwithstanding the eccentricity of such conduct, Msrach brought to the Lord the confession of his sins and of his repentance with such apparent sincerity and such extraordinary contrition, that his whole soul seemed, if I may be allowed the expression, to be dissolved in bitter tears, which he shed in torrents on such occasions. This was unanimously attested by all the priests to whom he ever confessed himself,

though many of them found great fault with his rude and impetuous behaviour.

In the month of August this year, when the vintage commences with us, a circumstance occurred which threw me again into the power of my tyrants, and plunged me into fresh misfortunes.

I have already stated that Kalust was the director of our town. Under him there was a sub-director, also of the clerical order, whose duty it was to collect the imposts paid by the inhabitants to the convent, and to superintend the works carried on for it, and for the performance of which, as I have had frequent occasion to observe, poor people were always selected. This ecclesiastical inspector was a hard-hearted man, so that his own nephew, the son of his deceased brother, had to endure not a little from his tyranny, which was carried to such a length, that even the head of this unfortunate orphan was not safe from the fangs of his uncle. He was a native of Tiflis, in Georgia, and of low birth. Near the time above-mentioned, in the last days of July, he was taking a survey of the vineyards with some of the young men of our place, when he espied a Persian, who, probably fatigued with travelling a great way, and faint with heat and thirst, had climbed the wall

of a vineyard, and was picking a bunch or two of grapes to refresh his parched lips. He immediately ordered the young men to beat the Persian on account of this insignificant trifle; but they refused to obey, representing to him that they could not maltreat a man for so trivial an offence; that he himself would scarcely hesitate in a similar predicament to take a bunch of grapes out of another person's garden to quench his thirst, by which the owner could not sustain any particular injury. The overseer, still more exasperated by this reply, seized a cudgel, ran up to the Persian, and struck him with such violence on the temple as to kill him on the spot. The relatives of the deceased preferred their complaint to the Chan of Erivan, and the latter sent to the patriarch requiring him to deliver up the culprit. There was no other alternative than to comply with this demand, or to expose the town as well as the convent to the vengeance of the Persians. To appease the latter, the patriarch chose rather to give up the murderer to the relatives of the victim, who immediately dragged him without the walls of the convent, bound his hands, and beat him without mercy. According to the custom of those parts, a murderer, or, in his stead, his relations, accommodate matters with the relatives of the deceased, by paying a sum of money proportionate to the abi-

lities of the offender to afford this kind of satisfaction, or the demands insisted on by the complainants. As the superiors of the convent manifested no disposition to enter into such a compromise, the Persians conducted their prisoner to the town, where they celebrated his arrival with a second drubbing, and then carried him to the city of Erivan. Here he had to endure fresh sufferings; after which they conducted him back with every kind of maltreatment to the town. The ecclesiastics had meanwhile resolved, in order to redeem their whole order from unmerited disgrace, to offer the injured party a sum for the ransom of the culprit; and they assured them, at the same time, that their kinsman had been killed by some of the young men of the place. They accepted the proffered compensation, and the overseer was delivered from their hands more dead than alive. In this manner did the reverend fathers extend their protection to a criminal, for the preservation of the honour of their community, and of the convent in particular; but by their indiscretion they brought the poor people of the town into a very awkward predicament: for no sooner was the Chan of Erivan apprized that the Persian had been murdered by people belonging to our place, than he issued orders that, by way of atoning for the crime, a fortress should be

built by us on a particular spot on Mount Arakat, as a check to the incursions of banditti. According to these orders the works were to be commenced the following spring, and to be carried on by thirty-five men of all ages, to be taken in turn from the indigent families, under the superintendence of five of the principal persons of the place. Besides these, two Persians and one Armenian were appointed to be inspectors in chief. The sons of the rich were to be relieved after working a week, and to return in six or seven weeks; but the poor after an interval of one, two, or three weeks, according to their circumstances. At the outset, when it was necessary to fix upon the persons who were to begin the works, Kalust, the director of our village, told the alderman whom to select for the purpose. He pitched upon me for the first, observing: "We have poor lads who live quite at their ease, and think of nothing but how to become scholars—there's for example, the widow's son," meaning me. Agreeably to these directions, the tithing-man came very early one Saturday morning, seized me, and forcibly took from my mother an ass, which was destined to share my fate. I was conducted to the great place where our public meetings were held. I was the only one whose hands and feet they

bound, and for the greater security that I might not run away, they tied me moreover to a tree, and threw my ass down on the ground beside me. Our elders assembled: "Thou wilt now have plenty of time," said they, with a malicious smile, "to learn to read and bind books; and therefore we have determined that thou shalt stay till the works are finished without being relieved." Accordingly, I alone was doomed not to return home till the completion of the works of the fortress.

It was no easy matter to collect thirty-five individuals, for the poor, knowing what they had to expect, secreted themselves. They therefore took such as they could find, without any farther distinction of persons. Had not a surety presented himself for me, I should have been left, lying bound as I was, for upwards of twenty-four hours. As soon as they had made up the required number, they dispatched us by daybreak next morning. Laden with provisions for a week, we arrived at Mount Arakat, and took the shortest, but as it turned out by far the most fatiguing way to its left flank; for it was frequently the case that we were obliged to crawl on all fours. Weary as we were, we found it almost impossible to rest ourselves occasionally, for the fear of being bitten by venomous

creatures, especially the *morm*,* would not allow us to think of sitting down, and we therefore cursed at every step the monk on whose account we were suffering such hardships.

We had begun to ascend the mountain, and forded the river Amper, which issues from it, when we came to a ruined place called Awan. Here I observed a cave in the mountain, hewn entirely out of the solid rock; I entered it from curiosity, but durst not venture farther than five paces on account of the darkness. At the entrance were still to be seen some ancient inscriptions; and the echo returned by this abode of the dead clearly indicated that it must be very spacious. Considering the nature of the place and the inscriptions, I conjectured that it was the burial-place of sovereigns and distinguished personages of the ancient Armenian monarchy: and this notion I thought the more likely to be correct, as Awan was some centuries ago a large city. I would fain have learned something more precise concerning this spot, but was afraid that none of the company would notice it but myself. Fortunately, there was among our fellow-travel-

* The *morm* resembles the scorpion in shape, but has a soft hairy skin like a mouse, either reddish or black, or of some other colour. The *morm* springs from the ground right at a person's face. Its venom is mortal.—*Author*.

lers a very aged Armenian, who, observing my restless curiosity, voluntarily communicated to me what he knew concerning it. According to his account, on the destruction of our monarchy, the inhabitants of Ani, the capital, out of respect and affection for their deceased Zars, removed their remains and deposited them in this cave, that they might not be profaned by the ruthless invaders.

From this place our journey was still more fatiguing, for we were obliged to climb hills that rose perpendicularly before us: the way was moreover so narrow, that it was impossible to go two abreast, and we were in constant fear of tumbling into the abyss, which in places could not be less than a hundred fathoms in depth. The river, which fell from the top to the bottom of this abyss, terrified us with its dreadful roar. After surmounting these difficulties, we arrived, about midnight, at the appointed place, called Teger, which signifies place or spot. The asses had meanwhile pursued a more convenient route, which we did not take because it was not so near, and we should have been at least four whole days in travelling that road. On reaching our place, we found no other lodging whatever than a tolerably spacious church, in which we passed the remainder of the night. Next

day we beheld heaps of stones, the relics of a large town. They all seemed to have been polished. The church stood close to the road by which we had come, and was inaccessible on the other side. It was built of unhewn stone, had columns, was of very regular architecture, and much resembled a design which I had once seen of an Italian church. It received all its light through the cupola. Notwithstanding the antiquity of this structure, which could not be estimated at less than a thousand years, it appeared as fresh as if it had been recently erected. The inscriptions on the tombs in and about the church, partly in the antient Armenian characters, which cannot now be decyphered, partly in Greek and Latin, authorize us to attribute to it so great an age: for Mesrop, who first established the Armenian alphabet and the characters that are still employed, lived about twelve hundred years ago; till that time every one had used the characters of the nation among which he lived. The mountain had abundance of wood in its valleys and low situations, and with the exception of bushes that had sprung up in wild places, or among rocks and ruins, scarcely any thing was to be seen but fruit trees. Notwithstanding the vestiges of destruction, and the extraordinary wildness of this country, it

was still very pleasant: but it was not possible to penetrate far into its luxuriant gardens; for in the first place, the wild vine had so entwined itself round all the trees that there was no forcing one's way through it; and in the next, every attempt was attended with danger owing to the wild beasts and serpents.

Thanks to the stupidity of the directing alderman and the other elders, we had time enough to rest after our journey and amused ourselves several days without working: for when they dispatched us to build a fortress, they did not consider that we had no master among us, and it was not till after our arrival at the place that one was sent for to Erivan, and engaged at a high salary, at the cost of our village. As soon as this master arrived we fell to work, and began to build the fortress round three sides of the church, for the fourth stood on the brink of a precipice of immense depth, overgrown with an almost impenetrable forest of various kinds of trees, and hence, as I have already observed, inaccessible. To me were allotted three asses, on which I brought stones for constructing the walls. We had taken with us, as I have said, provisions for one week only; our stock was completely exhausted on Friday evening, so that on Saturday we had nothing to eat. We expected

to be relieved on Sunday, but nobody came. We made preparations for leaving the work and returning home; but the Persian overseers, kinsmen of the murdered man, frustrated our design, and compelled us with abusive language and blows to wait for the relief, which did not arrive till the following Sunday. Having no bread, we subsisted for eight days together entirely on herbs, such as *shushan*, *tertenshuk*, or sorrel, and *neuk*. The stems of the latter plant furnish good and palatable food; but it gave us great trouble to gather them. The serpents being very fond of it, haunt the places were it grows, so that at every step you are in danger from them: and for the reasons above stated the fruits of trees were out of our reach. Owing to this wretched fare we became so much emaciated that both rich and poor were as meagre as shadows, excepting, however, the overseers, who knew no want. When at length a fresh party arrived to relieve us, we returned home with empty, hungry stomachs: but, as it had been determined that I was not to come back till the work was finished, the tithing-man called very early on the following day, and took me to the alderman, who with the most indecorous vehemence vociferated, that in him was vested the chief authority in this place;

he asked how I durst have the audacity to come home after he had ordered that I should not return till the work was finished? and combined with this question, the usual and indeed indispensably necessary conclusion. that I wished to place myself on a level with the children of the best families. He commanded the tithing-man to conduct me back to work the next morning with my hands tied. arranging matters so, that he might ride while I ran beside him; and to desire the Persian overseers, in his name, to treat me with the utmost severity, and not allow me to return home till the works were completed. Accordingly I was dragged away bound on Tuesday morning by the tithing-man, but when we had reached the mountain, he gave charge of me to a villager, who led me by a cord to the place of my destination. The alderman's message was faithfully delivered. Though, in compliance with his injunction, the Persians treated me with particular severity, they were by no means indulgent to my companions. By this harshness they problaby designed to urge us to insurrection, that they might have an excuse for quitting the place; for unaccustomed to the kind of life which they were obliged to lead on the mountain, away from their homes and families, they found their si-

tuation extremely irksome. Suspecting their intention, we resolved to bear every hardship with patience till the completion of the work. My lot was of course more severe than that of all the others, because I was not relieved, while they had to suffer but for a week at a time. I found, however, some alleviation of my misery, inasmuch as the master-mason, a very good, kind-hearted man, took a liking to me. When I had informed him of my condition and all the afflictions I had already endured, he manifested a tender sympathy for my lot, and so much the more respect for my acquirements as he could himself neither read nor write. He one day requested me to tell him, for his own edification, whence it was that I derived such fortitude under tribulations. I cited the examples of the blessed martyrs, who endured all sorts of hardships and sufferings with resignation and unshaken confidence in God; saying, that thus too did I, regarding all that the world affords as vanity, and this life as transient, bear my afflictions the more cheerfully, as I hoped to be recompensed for them with everlasting happiness in a future state. I reminded him of the sentence pronounced upon Adam: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread," observing, that mankind must continue to be subject to its

operation till the end of the world; and that we ought to submit to it with reverence, if we would not rebel against the sacred and omnipotent will of our Creator. I quoted also that cheering text of the New Testament: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest for your souls." But as the man knew nothing at all of the Holy Scriptures, and understood but little of my representations, I was obliged to bethink me of something that would be more intelligible to him. I recollected a hymn, composed by an old Armenian in the Persian language. Its chief drift is to set forth the superiority of the Christian to the Mahometan, and it concludes with the assurance that the former, if he follows the law of God and his commandments, shall be a partaker of Paradise.

My master was delighted with my conversation, and I too was pleased that I had at last met with one who had some regard for me, and through whom, in case of emergency, I might obtain a subsistence and protection: but this joy lasted only a moment, and was then changed into bitter sorrow. We had been conversing behind a wall which we had just run up, and had been overheard by a Persian, whom, though very near us, we had not observed. Exaspe-

rated at my discourse, and especially at the assertion that Paradise belonged to Christians, he called me to him, and asked what I had been saying to the master. Frightened at the wildness of his look, I denied that I had said any thing, but was soon compelled by him to recite the hymn. He immediately called his comrade, to whom he repeated my words, on which, both of them began to belabour me with their sticks, continually crying out: "Now get thee to Paradise!—here is thy Paradise!" In this manner they beat me till I had not a spot on my head or body that was free from wounds, and I was covered all over with blood. The inhuman wretches then dragged me into the church, and threw me into a dark place, where formerly the sacred garments of the priests had been deposited. When I came to myself, deeply sensible of the misery of my situation, I prayed to God with a flood of tears that he would have mercy on me in my sufferings and tribulations, and as he had delivered the three youths from the fiery furnace, and had wrought many great and signal miracles, that he would also be pleased to deliver me from my torments, to heal my wounds, to take me under the shadow of his wings, and to send me a helper and comforter, for I had none; or, if it were not his will that I should ever enjoy peace in this life, that he

would bestow on me the favour of shortening my days, which were only filled with anguish and bitterness. I had already passed more than an hour in such prayers and lamentations, when a woman, whom the Persians had brought with them to cook their victuals and to wash for them, hearing what had befallen me, came secretly to me unknown to any one. She brought me milk to drink, and bound horse-dung upon my wounded head, which was covered with gore. In this state, without any other nourishment than milk, without any medicines, without attendance, consigned as it were to the embraces of cold and damp, the ordinary powers of man must have failed, had not the arm of the Almighty preserved my life. I lay two whole months with none to inform my mother of my condition, with none so much as to assist me to turn from one side to the other, excepting the kind Persian woman, who, however, could not visit me oftener than once a day, and then but by stealth, and not without great apprehension. During my illness, my two tormentors, and also the third overseer, the Armenian, were superseded, and two other Persians and an Armenian sent in their stead. At length I began to mend a little, and to walk or rather to crawl out into the open air. My companions had bethought them of a stratagem to

lighten their labour, from which the former overseers had not allowed them a moment's relaxation, and represented to the new inspectors, that, on account of their distance from home, they were unable to attend divine service in the church as prescribed by our religion—that the congregation had for this reason sent with them a scholar—meaning me—to read prayers, and to go through part of the church service before a full meeting of them every day, for which purpose they required a few hours daily, and if this indulgence were denied them, they threatened to complain, and to relinquish their work. The overseers complied without hesitation, for they were much more humane than their predecessors, and wished to avoid all occasion for disturbance, for which they would probably have been called to account, as people who knew not how to exercise the authority with which they were invested. Be this as it may, no sooner was I sufficiently recovered, than I began to read prayers thrice a day: we had thus abundant relaxation from our labour, which, in fact, was the sole motive of our devotions. For this reason my companions were constantly urging me to prolong these meetings as much as possible. In our prayers we never forgot the archimandrite, through whose means we had to labour here, and besought the Al-

mighty to requite him duly for our sufferings. We remembered, with similar feelings, the directing alderman, and others of the same stamp. The Persians, seeing me read and sing without book,* conceived some respect for me, especially in consideration of my youth.

In the course of this work several of my companions—I cannot recollect precisely how many—died from various causes. Some were hurt by the fall of stones, and died for want of medical aid; others from the bite of venomous serpents; while others, being a fortnight, three weeks, or even longer, without being relieved, perished with hunger or disease. For my part I no longer knew any want in regard to food, for I had gained the esteem of our master, who, after my recovery, was pleased to give me a place at his table. The approach of winter put an end to our sufferings. In the name of the whole party I thanked God for sending snow and cold weather; we quitted the mountain, where we had been for six successive months, and returned to our homes, for it was impossible to proceed with the work.

On our return we pursued a different route, which was longer but less fatiguing than the other. After we had travelled somewhat more

* The literal expression of the original.—*Translator.*

than four leagues, it led down hill along the river Ampert. This river is deepest in autumn, but then its waters are not over the breast, in some places not reaching higher than the waist or the knee, but with the exception of certain deep spots and holes. The current is in general very impetuous, and such is the noise occasioned by its falls, that persons speaking together at a considerable distance from them can scarcely understand one another. The water of the Ampert is extremely clear and agreeable: the river has its origin in the springs of Mount Arakat; these unite on a projecting platform of the mountain, which spot is called Ampert, that is, a place fortified by nature, and forms a level and tolerably extensive surface. Here the water descends in two cascades down a steep precipice, and afterwards collects into a river. The lands of the adjacent villages are irrigated by its water: for in this country neither rain nor snow falls as in other places in sufficient quantity, and all the fields are watered by rivers, springs, or canals cut from them, and subterraneous wells. My companions did not tell me that, in fording the Ampert, it is necessary to keep one's eyes fixed on the shore, and on no account to look at the water, as the sight of it occasions dizziness and fainting. Placing our clothes upon our heads, we began to ford the

stream. No sooner was I in the water than I felt an intolerable chill in my whole body, which was still covered with sores, and especially in my legs; I had scarcely proceeded a few steps before my head began to turn round with looking at the water, and my sight soon failed me. The force of the current threw me down, and I was carried away by the stream and driven between two great stones. My companions had not at first observed my fall, and afterwards none of them had the courage to venture to my assistance. On this occasion, the mighty arm of the Lord alone again preserved my life. In falling I had not entirely lost my recollection, and as soon as I had somewhat recovered my breath, I kept out the water as well as I could. It hurried me along, however, to the distance of full seventy fathoms, and then, fortunately for me, drove me against a tolerably large stone, over which it could not roll me, but held me there in nearly an upright posture. The imminence of the danger brought me completely to myself, and gave me strength. I opened my eyes, and strove with all my might to hold fast by this stone. My strength, however, would soon have forsaken me, as all my limbs were almost completely benumbed by the coldness of the water, had it not so happened that a Persian was walking to and fro on

the bank, seeking the shallowest and most convenient place for his ass to cross; for this animal, as every body knows, cannot swim, is therefore afraid of the water, and will not venture into it where it is muddy, but only in such places where it is shallow and clear, and the bottom may be distinctly seen. Perceiving this Persian, I exclaimed: "Man sent by God, help, save me!" He immediately stripped, plunged into the water, took me by the arm, and dragged me to the shore. As all my garments were carried away by the torrent, he covered me with his mantle, placed me on his ass, and led me to the village of Akarak, not above a werst distant from the river, formerly inhabited by Armenians, but now exclusively by Persians. My deliverer, with the greatest humanity, conducted me to the house of an acquaintance, and begged him to look after me till my perfect recovery, and to render me all possible assistance during my weakness, promising to repay him for his trouble on his return. I was immediately taken and laid in the stable, for, with us, this is the warmest place, and consequently the best adapted for the reanimation of persons benumbed with cold. When I had regained my natural warmth, and was refreshed by sleep, they brought me clothes and food: the generous Persian took his mantle, assuring me that I

was in good hands, and bade me farewell. I thanked him with tears for saving my life, and for all the kindness I had experienced at his hands.

At this place I remained a fortnight, in which I completely recovered my strength, and my health improved. During this interval I went to see the old fortress there, and the ruins of the convent of Parbi, the first that was founded in the third century by the blessed martyr and apostle of Armenia, St. Grigorios. To this place persons bitten by mad dogs are still brought, and here they find a cure, or a little of the earth taken from the interior of the church is put into water, and the latter given to the patient to drink. The origin of this mode of cure is as follows:—St. Grigorios was officiating in this edifice, when some Pagans threw a mad dog (I know not whether it was dead or alive) into the church, and said tauntingly to Grigorios: "If thy God is so mighty, cure this dog." The saint addressed his prayers to God; they were attended with this miraculous effect, that the dog ran out of the church in perfect health, and that all persons afflicted with madness from the bite of a rabid animal, when brought hither, instantly recover.

At the expiration of the fortnight, I expressed my sincere thanks to my hosts for their care and

kindness, and set out on my return home. By the contributions of these good people and other Persians, I was supplied with money, to the amount of about a ruble, for travelling expenses. My road led through the village of Uschakan, which is about fifteen wersts from our place. By the way I found, at the foot of a hill, a monument of rough stone, about two fathoms and a half in height. I stopped to survey it, and regretted that I could not read the inscription upon it in ancient Greek; when an inhabitant of Uschakan came towards me and said: "What art thou here examining so inquisitively? or hast thou a mind to be the *eighth*?" By these words my curiosity was but the more strongly excited, and I earnestly besought him to inform me who was interred under this stone. "On this spot," said he, "there were formerly vineyards, and where this monument stands were interred seven brothers, who were murdered by robbers, being sent out by their father one after the other to look for the first who was missing, and who had been left here as watchman. At length, after waiting in vain for the return of the last of them, he went himself, and was also slain and thrown by the villains into a pit, in which the juice of the grapes is collected: for which reason this place is called the tomb of the seven brothers."

Having thanked him for the information, I pursued my way to the village of Uschakan, which is inhabited solely by Armenians. There I arrived at dusk, and immediately sought the house of an old acquaintance, named Sarkis (Sergius,) who, at the time of the invasion of the Zar Heraklios, as related above, had fled to Wagarschapat and lived with us. But, the moment I entered his house, he stared full in my face, and was so terrified that, uttering a hasty ejaculation, he ran away, leaving me all alone. I was exceedingly astonished at so singular a reception; and, in no less alarm than himself, I went out into the street, and it presently occurred to me that poor Sarkis mistook me for an apparition. I was right in my conjecture. Several people sallied forth from their houses, and the breathless Sarkis called out to them: "Look, there he is, look! All his comrades declared he was drowned in the Ampert; his mother has had the *panichidion* sung and the funeral service performed for him, and now he appears here! But it is not he himself—it is his ghost. Certainly there must be a curse upon him so that he cannot rest!" With these words he pointed his gun to fire at me. No sooner had I heard this sage deduction, no sooner was I aware of the valiant resolution formed by Sarkis, than with all the haste I could, I assured

him I was not dead, telling him how I had been saved, and where I had since been; after which, to produce more certain conviction, I repeatedly crossed myself and said one prayer after another, trembling all the while for fear Sarkis might nevertheless shoot me.

The neighbours being less frightened were capable of seeing more clearly, and forming a more sober judgment than he: and though they might themselves feel some doubt, they nevertheless told him that I could not be a spectre, because I prayed and crossed myself, which a spirit who was in the power of the devil could not do: besides I should not, in this case, have spoken to him, but seized him at once— "And then again," continued they, "look you, his feet are the right way."* I sought to approach them by degrees, so that they might see me better in the dusk, repeated my former assurance, and in confirmation of it renewed my prayers. The priest arrived: he advanced towards me to discover whether I was dead or living, and made the sign of the cross: I crossed myself too, went up to him and kissed his hand.

* My country-people believe in apparitions of deceased persons, but they have a notion that they differ from the living in having their feet reversed, that is, the heels before and the toes behind.—*Author.*

Sarkis was at length convinced that I was not a visitor from the other world: he expressed his joy, embraced me, and led me into his house. His neighbours followed, for they had still some doubts, and wished to see whether I would eat; and they were not thoroughly satisfied till they saw me fall to with as keen an appetite as a living person, fatigued with travelling and very hungry, might be expected to do.

As soon as I had refreshed myself, Sarkis told me that my comrades, the whole village, and my mother, were satisfied that I was dead, that my mother had already caused a tomb to be erected to my memory, and was plunged into extreme sorrow on account of my loss. During supper he and his guests drank with sincere joy to my health. When they had retired, Sarkis advised me to hasten home early in the morning and to comfort my mother, who might otherwise, perhaps, die with the excess of her grief and despair. Next morning I rose very early, and first went to the church to matins, to pray to God and St. Mesrop, who, as I have said, gave the Armenians and Georgians their alphabet, thereby enlightened both nations, and afterwards translated the Bible and other sacred books, as well as the ordinances of the church and all the religious ceremonies, into our language, wri-

ting them in the new characters of his invention. The two priests were already in the church, but sat quite silent, the one on the right the other on the left of the altar, merely coughing now and then. I supposed that they were waiting for somebody: but three hours or more passed away and there they sat motionless as ever. The sun had already risen, when they went out of the church one after the other, without exchanging a single word. Convinced that it was all over with their matins, I went up to the spot near the altar, where St. Mesrop is interred, prayed and paid due homage to the saint, and returned to Sarkis, to whom I expressed my astonishment at what I had witnessed, and inquired the cause. "Our priests," replied he, "derive a revenue from the living and the dead, and have their tithes into the bargain, but such is their cupidity, that they are not content with this ample income; and either to augment it by increasing their business, or from some new scheme of their hypocrisy, they quarrel with one another, with a view that the inhabitants may go to the one whom they like best, and beg him to be reconciled to the other, at the same time bringing presents to their favourite priest. On week-days it is no un-

common thing for them to perform no service at all; each waits for the other to begin, and as neither will give way, they at last quit the church without doing any thing. It seems, therefore, as if they were waiting for fresh presents."

I now took leave of Sarkis, and set out with a companion who was going to our village. The houses of Uschakan are all built of a porous stone, of which all the adjacent hills and mountains are composed, and which is there called *tschetschot*, the spotted. It is of two colours, sometimes reddish, at others black, and as light as pumice-stone: it does not sink in water, unless some other species of stone be enclosed in it; and it is used in the baths for rubbing away the callosities on the feet. The village is fortified on three sides with walls of this hard stone; on the fourth it is inaccessible by nature, for there it borders on an extremely steep rocky declivity, at the foot of which, at the depth of more than fifty fathoms, flows the river Karpi, which likewise encompasses our village. It is not broad, no where very deep, and has many shallow places. In the vicinity of Uschakan are found two remarkable roots. With one, called *toron*, is made a red colour, which is used in Russia, and

the Russian name of which is *morena*;* the other, *losçhtak* or *manrakor*, (mandrake,) bears an exact resemblance to the human figure, and is used by us medicinally. It grows pretty large. A dog is usually employed to draw it out of the ground; for which purpose the earth is first dug from about it, and a dog being fastened to it by a string, is made to pull till the whole of the root is extracted. The reason of this is, according to the current report, that if a man were to pull up this root he would infallibly die, either on the spot or in a very short time; and it is also said, that when it is drawn out the moan of a human voice is always heard: but I cannot answer for the truth of these circumstances, as I never witnessed them, nor, indeed, do I myself believe them.

On quitting the village we immediately descended the above-mentioned declivity by beaten foot-paths, and surveyed some caverns in it, which are at times inhabited by hermits. A stone bridge, erected by the patriarch Simeon, leads across the river, in which is found the fish *karmirachait*, which, as I have related,

* This must be incorrect, I have not met with any person who was acquainted with this name.—*Translator.*

was applied in the convent to my broken finger. As soon as we had passed the bridge, we had to ascend a rocky hill of tolerable elevation. I observed in climbing it, on almost every side, stones of different dimensions piled pyramidally on one another. My fellow traveller told me to pick up a stone and throw it on one of the heaps; he did so himself, pointing at the same time to an eminence on the right, where he said he would explain to me the reason of this practice, which was observed by all who ascended the mountain. On this eminence he showed me a cavern paved with stone, and large enough for one person, and by the side of it another, the natural height of which had been increased by art, so that I estimated it at fifteen *arschines*. In the latter lay a heap of human bones. My companion related that, about one hundred and fifty years ago, this cave was the residence of a man named David, who had the appearance of a hermit, and who was universally styled *Artar*; that is, the just, the righteous—a man who could not fail to go to Paradise. About this time a severe famine prevailed for upwards of three years, so that the people had already begun to eat all the animals otherwise reputed unclean. David, meanwhile, led a most exemplary life, and daily went to the convent

to join in the devotions of the monks. At length it happened, that previously to the holy week (Easter) one of the servants of the convent was sent round, as usual, to the neighbouring villages, to collect eggs. As he was passing David's cave, the hermit invited him to enter and rest himself. The monk went in; the hermit pressed him to sit down, and presently stepped out himself, as if he had something or other to do. His visitor in the mean time looked round the cave, discovered the pit with human bones in it, conceived a suspicion of his host, but could devise no other expedient for his deliverance, than to write with charcoal upon the upper garment which David had left behind, these words: "Release me from the cave—he devours men and will devour me." The hermit had merely gone out for the purpose of looking round to satisfy himself that no person was near; he then quickly returned, seized the unfortunate monk, bound his hands and legs, gagged his mouth, and threw him into the pit. It was early in the morning; and luckily for his prisoner he went the same day to divine service at the convent. He had no scruple to leave his cave, for such was the veneration paid to him, that not a creature would have presumed to enter without his special invitation: but when it was ob-

served in the church what was written on his back, he was secured, and people were immediately dispatched to search the cave. The messengers drew the poor monk out of the pit, brought him back to the convent, and reported what a quantity of human bones they had discovered. It was known that during the famine many persons had disappeared in an unaccountable manner, and it was even conjectured that they had been killed and eaten. All suspicion now fell naturally enough upon the hermit; and at the first examination he confessed, that the bones found in his cave had really belonged to such missing persons, whose flesh he had devoured; that in the daytime he had invited them to enter, and had caught them in the night by means of heaps of stones placed in the nearest and most frequented footpaths; for when the passengers stumbled upon these stones in the dark, he could easily distinguish, by their rattling, whether it was one person or more; if the former he went out to him, invited him to his cave with his usual hospitality, and in case the stranger refused the invitation he sometimes killed him on the spot. After the matter had been thoroughly investigated, he was tied to a horse's tail and dragged about till, as the story goes, no part of him was left but the

ears. From that time it has been customary for every passenger to add a stone to the heap.

During this narrative we gradually approached the spot where we quitted the mountains, and descended to the plain of Arakat. Not far from the foot of the mountain I found, on one of the many rocky hills there, a sort of small lake, or rather a collection of stagnant water, and around it large heaps of fragments of different kinds of earthen vessels. My fellow-traveller confirmed what I had long before and repeatedly been told concerning this spot, namely, that at the decease of St. Mesrop, Wagan Amatuni, the then prince of Uschakan, a powerful monarch in his day, insisted that Mesrop, as a native of Uschakan, should be buried in the church of that place, where he was himself in the sequel interred beside him. The ecclesiastics of the convent of Etschmiazyn, who bore the remains of the saint, had set them down on this spot, that they and the vast concourse of people who followed might have an opportunity of resting themselves. No sooner did they begin to move forward again, than there fell an uncommonly violent shower, which lasted only a few minutes, but all the water of which collected on the spot where Mesrop's body had rested. Ever since that time all persons having the

itch or other cutaneous disorders come hither on pilgrimage,* bringing with them new vessels which have not been used. With these they here pour Mesrop's water over themselves, break their vessels, and obtain an immediate cure. This may be relied on as true: but I am not equally certain, whether this water dries up in summer and collects afresh from rains, or whether it always remains just as it is without receiving any supply from springs.

My companion walked very fast, intending to return the same day to Uschakan. I was too weak to keep up with him, and at the same time afraid to be left behind; for in autumn we have in our country such heavy fogs, even at noon-day, that it is frequently impossible to distinguish a person's face at the distance of two yards. That I might not fall into the clutches of ravenous beasts, of which the wolves are particularly dangerous at that season of the year, I begged my fellow-traveller to slacken his pace a little, but, regardless of my request, he left me by myself. Overcome with fear I proceeded very deliberately, and wept or said my prayers to keep up my spirits. In this way I descended from the mountain, passed the Persian village of Mulla Dursun, and at length reached the mill of Just Bascha, a league, or at farthest a league and a half

distant from the convent, to which it belongs. There I resolved to rest myself a little, that I might at the same time learn of the miller whether there was any thing new in the town or in the convent. On entering I heard a man groaning below. I ventured down, and found the miller thrown bound among the wheels. He was covered with blood, and could scarcely request me to loose him. He had received a visit from robbers, who had carried off all the corn and flour, and handled him so roughly into the bargain as scarcely to leave breath in his body. When I quitted him, he begged me to report the circumstance in the convent and in our town, where I arrived before evening. The boys, as soon as they perceived me, immediately set up shouts of—"A ghost! a ghost!" Exhausted as I was this reception alarmed me, and I could scarcely penetrate through the crowd of silly urchins, who escorted me with incessant shouts to our house. The first object which there met my view was my mother sitting in deep mourning absorbed in profound thought*. She could scarcely believe

* According to our custom men, as a mark of mourning, go with the shirt collar-open and the breast bare; whereas women wear their hair dishevelled and cover the head with a black handkerchief.—*Author.*

her eyes when she beheld me, rose from her seat, and came silently towards me: but I called out to her, "Mother, I am alive!" and fell about her neck. She could scarcely breathe, and was unable to utter a word: she pressed me to her bosom, and bedewed me with her tears. I too wept for joy, and it was some minutes before I could speak. By degrees I became composed, and related to her all my adventures from the time that I was sent to work. She then told me in her turn how she had received intelligence of my death, what she had done for my memory, and lastly what she had suffered during my absence from the envy and inhumanity of our enemies. When it was quite dark my brother returned home and rejoiced with us. To him I had to repeat what I had previously related to my mother. At length, after supping on sour milk, the only food my mother had, we retired to rest. Next day, and for several successive days, all the people of the place were filled with astonishment at my return, and many would not believe it till they had seen me with their own eyes.

We now lived for some time though poorly yet undisturbed, for after the husbandry labour is finished and in winter, people are not summoned away to work, but can employ themselves in domestic occupations. In the course

of this winter my mother, after consulting me, resolved to marry my brother; he assented to the plan the more willingly, as he had already found means to save some money. We hoped, by extending our connexions, to deliver ourselves from our persecutors, as we should then have some protection; and with a view to ally ourselves with wealthy or respectable families, we determined not to choose for the bride a very young female, but one of maturer years. We made application accordingly, and the nuptials were soon solemnized. My brother's wife brought him for her portion half as much as he, agreeably to our custom, had been obliged to give to her parents. The expenses of the wedding were in some measure defrayed by the present in money which each guest made to the bridegroom, and which produced my brother about eighteen rubles.

According to our custom a new-married woman must not speak to any person in the house excepting her husband and servants. She has therefore to express herself by signs, and turns round immediately if a man or even a woman looks at her. She eats with her husband alone and not at the family table. This tyrannical custom retains its sway even after she has lain-in three or four times, nay, as I have known in-

stances, after she has lived ten years with her husband. Four months, however, had not elapsed from my brother's marriage, when I began to be heartily weary of the mute conversation with my sister in-law. Still more did I pity her to whom this constraint could not fail to be equally irksome and vexatious. I spoke therefore with my mother on the subject; and as her sentiments coincided with mine, I proposed to my brother to allow his wife to talk to us with her tongue and not with her hands and feet, and assured him of my willingness to teach her to read. Thus did we renounce a silly and barbarous practice, regardless of the ridicule and calumny with which we should be assailed in our town; for it could not well be kept secret—in short, our new relative conversed with us as freely as any other individual.

Soon afterwards, in the month of June, I went to Baiasit with a man who had come from that place, and been taken ill in our village. We had one horse, on which I set my patient while I trudged along on foot. We joined a caravan carrying wine from Aschtarak to Baiasit. In the afternoon of the first day we reached the river Erachs or Araks. It was not so much swollen as in the early part of the spring, but still broad enough, and in most places very deep.

When it overflows its banks it is crossed either on rafts or planks, to the ends of which are attached blown bladders or skins, in which it is common in Asia for travellers to carry wine, water, or milk. In this state the current of the Araks is extremely impetuous, and does a great deal of mischief, carrying away houses and laying waste the fields. We had some difficulty to find a shallow place, which we forded, but my fellow-traveller and myself had well nigh perished in the attempt. I had, namely, on reaching the river, got up on horseback behind my patient. Being too weak to manage the horse he loosed the bridle, and the animal slipping from the shallow plunged into a deep part of the river. They shouted to me from the caravan to leave the Baiasit-man to his fate and take care of myself. I contrived, however, to lay hold of the horse's tail, and my companion held fast by me. The beast luckily swam well, and after struggling for ten minutes to regain its footing, it perceived at length some horses that had already reached the other bank, on which it exerted all its strength to rejoin them. On the banks of the Araks grows a shrub, called *elgon*, which burns extremely bright, and casts a great heat: the people of the caravan immediataly kindled a fire with it to dry our clothes. Before

evening we arrived at the village of Plur. I attended the service of vespers, and sung and read. When it was over I accosted the priest, and to find out what sort of man he was, I asked him several questions concerning the meaning of various texts of Scripture. As the generality of country priests are wholly incapable of explaining a text, so they rarely know where a passage one asks after is to be found. My poor priest of Plur, with a look of the most urgent entreaty, motioned me to drop my questions and rather go along with him. I complied, and he treated me to an excellent supper and wine. I passed the night with the caravan. My companions took occasion from my having sung in the church, to praise my learning, which they did with the greater warmth, owing to the high opinion they had previously conceived of it, partly from what they had heard in our village, and partly from the observations I had made during the journey; and they took it into their heads to spread a report that I was come in quest of a wife. The girls of the place in consequence cast stolen glances at me from beneath their veils, thinking no doubt to attract my notice. My thoughts however were occupied with a very different matter, and that was how to spunge as much as possible upon the priest.

Next day at noon we pursued our journey, crossed several considerable eminences at the foot of Mount Ararat to its south side, where the plain of the Ararat terminates at the village of Archatsch, the environs of which yield excellent millstones. On one of the loftiest hills, called Chatsch-Gaiduk (cross-hill), I observed a large monument, and on inquiring of my fellow-traveller what it was, he related what follows:—"Some centuries ago a bishop of the convent of Etschmiazyn, returning from a journey to the monastery, stopped at Baiasit to dine there with a friend: the latter, on sitting down to table, advised him to take a stick in his hand as the others did.—'Why so,' asked the bishop, 'Because,' replied his host, 'the town has for some time past swarmed with serpents to such a degree that the inhabitants are not safe, from them even in their houses, and therefore every person carries a stick for the purpose of defending himself in case a serpent should make its appearance.' The bishop, hearing this, rose from the table, fell on his knees and prayed to God, but so that none could hear the purport of his prayer. On rising from his knees, he assured all who were in the house, that so long as he should retain all his teeth in his head, no inhabitant of the town should be bitten by those venomous reptiles. When dinner was over the

bishop pursued his route, but he was scarcely out of the town before an extraordinary commotion took place there among the snakes, which issued from every hole and corner. The inhabitants were thrown into the utmost amazement and consternation by this phænomenon, and the pacha directed the public cryer to inquire what had happened. He was informed what the good bishop had done, and what he had promised, and sent a horseman after him to bring back his head, which was cut off on the very spot where he was overtaken, and deposited in a leaden chest at the entrance of the pacha's residence, in order to preserve all his teeth in their places: but his body was buried, and with the approbation of the then patriarch, the pacha erected, in memory of the bishop, this tomb, the appearance of which proves that it is some hundred years old."—He promised, on our arrival at Baiasit, to show me the head of the bishop, and I determined to make strict inquiry into the truth of the story.

We had proceeded a few leagues farther, when I was induced to comply with the urgent solicitation of a man from Aschtarak, and to drop behind the caravan, because his horse, being heavily laden with wine, could not keep up with the others. I therefore sent my patient forward with the caravan, while we

stopped above three hours in a place not far distant from the uninhabited village of Karabasar, on the site of which there stood in ancient times a large city. It is also related, that there was formerly to be seen at this place a river which has long been covered with earth; and this account is not improbable, for I myself heard distinctly the noise of water running under ground. After dark we arrived at the village of Gara-Bulach, or black spring, where we overtook our caravan, and passed the night with it. This village is situated at the extremity of the eminences over which we had to travel, and belongs to the district of Baiasit, in the province of Kurdustan. Their inhabitants, the Jasites, are a wandering tribe. In summer they rove about on the mountains, and in winter return to their village, which is their principal station, probably on account of the extraordinary excellence of the water of the Gara-Bulach, or the black spring. The Jasites are not Mahometans, nor is it known precisely what religion they profess. They speak Turkish, but have another language known only to their own tribe. They have no written characters, but have a particular class, consisting of scholars, who transmit their learning as a secret from father to son, each father revealing it to that son whom he deems the most worthy. They have many other singular

customs that deserve to be mentioned. In taking an oath and in many other cases, they cross themselves like the Christians, but with this difference, that they fold their hands, raising only the middle fingers, which they place one against the other, and in this manner make the sign of the cross. When they drink red wine they lift it up with both hands, asserting that this wine is the blood of Christ, and if a drop of this blood happens to fall upon the ground they lick the spot with their tongues. They are remarkably hospitable. Any Jasite would rather sacrifice himself and his family than betray his guest or suffer any harm to befall him while he remains in his house. They are strictly forbidden to inveigh against the devil, and would perhaps almost put to death any one who should transgress in this particular; for, they say, the devil was once the next in rank to God; he was punished by him for his sin, expelled from heaven, and deprived of his angelic form; and, for aught we know, God may yet forgive him and restore him to his former dignity. Were you to draw a circle round a Jasite, whether sitting or standing, he would probably continue in the same posture without stirring till he died, unless you erased the circle, which, when any one has thus fixed him, he earnestly begs you to do. The origin and tendency of

this practice are secrets known to themselves alone. They weep and lament over the dead forty days, sitting almost night and day for that period in the church-yard: nay, it is a fact, that some of them have abstained from food so long as to become quite emaciated, and to expire on the grave. What I have here said concerning the Jasites is universally known in our country, and I have myself witnessed and verified all these particulars. I have heard, moreover, that the Jasites, in commemoration of the three days passed by the people of Niniveh, after Jonah's denunciation, in imploring the Almighty to forgive their sins and to deliver them from the destruction which impended over their heads for their wickedness, in like manner devote three days every year to profound penance, sitting in their houses, and not only abstaining from every kind of food themselves, but even denying suck to their infants and food to their cattle during that time.

We passed the night at Gara-Bulach, and in the evening of the next day arrived at Baiasit. The country between those two places is a *steppe* almost entirely covered with swamps and tall reeds. Baiasit itself is situated on a lofty mountain, and from the north side by which we entered, it seemed to be built one house upon another, for we could see nearly all of them

down to their foundations. Owing to this position of the town, it sometimes happens, that after falls of rain, which are frequent and very heavy, the pedestrian is carried away, in spite of his teeth, by the torrent. The sun is not visible here but at noon; for both on the east and west the place is surrounded by hills, which intercept the rays of that luminary.

My patient had a house of his own at Baiasit, but the wife of the poor fellow had during his absence made away with all he possessed, and when he inquired what had become of it, she answered him with the grossest abuse, went off, and did not return. We had thus to pass the night by ourselves; and as our kind hostess had not left us a morsel of bread, we were condemned to a rigid fast. Next day, when I was to be paid, he gave me only sixty *paras* instead of the ninety for which my brother had agreed with him: I took the money without remonstrating, but merely desired him to hand over the remainder, if he should recover, to one of the churches. Baiasit is chiefly inhabited by Armenians, and contains four churches, one of which is very large. The same morning my host conducted me to the *sarai* or palace of the pacha, and there showed me the leaden box in which the head of our bishop is deposited, and on which, from the time of his death, a lamp is

kept burning at night at the expense of the pacha.

About noon it so happened that I witnessed the melancholy end of Manuk Aga, one of the wealthiest inhabitants of the town. The cause was as follows:—The pacha's son wished to buy a large *fehs*,* but would not give the price demanded. Manuk Aga gave for it just the sum required as the lowest price by the seller of the son of the pacha. The latter, highly affronted, preferred his complaint to his father, who, deeming it perfectly just, ordered Manuk Aga to be hanged for the alleged insult to his son, which sentence was accordingly executed before my face. The more I pitied the fate of this man, the more anxious I was to quit Baiasit; but I was desirous of first taking a nearer view of the pacha's palace, because from the road it had the appearance of a very fine edifice. It was built of black and white marble, cut into blocks about the size of our bricks. Instead of mortar they were cemented with lead, and secured besides with small iron cramps. The marble ready wrought, and likewise the lead and

* An under or skullcap, commonly worn by the Asiatics. These caps are of two kinds; some being small and round, and others having a broad brim, which latter are in general very dear.—*Author.*

iron, were brought from Erserum, which is about six days' journey from Baiasit. This palace was built in the style of a castle or fortress, and encompassed with a wall of marble. Upon the whole, the edifice was not large, though I was informed that it had then been sixteen years in building.

The day having meanwhile declined, I determined to pass the night at Baiasit, and therefore went to a *caravanserai*, partly hoping to meet with a companion, and partly to spend the time more agreeably and hear something new. Here I was actually made acquainted with an extraordinary occurrence which had happened a few days previously, and of which I had not heard a syllable the whole of the day. My host, namely, on my inquiring what news they had in the town, related to me, in a very circumstantial manner, the cruel death of a woman named Manuschak, who was celebrated throughout the whole country for her uncommon beauty. The name itself denotes an exceedingly pretty flower of the brightest azure. She had lived above a year in our town of Wagarschapat, whence she had removed not more than a month before my departure with my patient. I was already acquainted with the history of this beauty, or more properly speaking, this martyr, but not with her final sufferings and death.

Manuschak was married to the son of the Armenian priest of Chnuss, a town in the province of Kurdustan. On account of her extraordinary beauty the pacha of Chnuss took her forcibly from her husband, and lived with her six years. During this period she adhered to the Christian ritual, and even received the holy sacrament privately in her apartments; for which purpose the priest disguised himself as a tradesman, and went to her with all sorts of commodities. The pacha's confidence in her increased daily, and in the last year arrived at such a pitch, that she was even allowed to go abroad unattended. At length she availed herself of the opportunity while he was once absent for three days. She wrote to her husband, and sent her letter by an Armenian pedlar, who, in pursuit of his business, wore the Mahometan dress. In this letter she complained of the pressure she endured from the yoke of a false religion; representing that she had been for six years separated from the church of Christ, but was now firmly resolved to seize the first favourable opportunity to devote herself anew to the holy faith in which she had been bred; she therefore implored him to aid and accompany her in her flight, and hoped he would despise all dangers, if not out of love to her, yet out of love to God. She likewise appointed the time

and place when and where he might expect her. She then put off her jewels and costly apparel, and clothed herself in mean attire, which she had had made on pretext that it was intended as a present to one of her slaves, quitted her apartments and locked them after her.

She was met at the appointed place by her unfortunate husband, and they proceeded together to Wagarschapat, where they were most likely to be secure from the persecutions of the Chan; for neither the Shah nor the Turkish Sultan would dare, out of reverence for the temple of God, to remove a fugitive who has placed himself under the protection of the convent. Thus did Manuschak live with her husband in our town somewhat more than a year; but I cannot state precisely how long, though I well remember having seen her some months before my journey to Baiasit, and being filled like many others with admiration of her beauty.

She actually surpassed all the female beauties, not only of our town but also of Baiasit, where the women are remarkable for personal charms, and especially for the delicacy of their complexion, which is to be ascribed to the water of the spring there, called Ag-Bulach, or white spring. Our elders, and all those whose circumstances caused them to think something of themselves, vied with one another in courting her

favour. Her answer was uniformly the same, namely, that it was not in their power to give her what she had possessed and abandoned in order to preserve the faith and keep the law of Jesus Christ, and that she once had more to give away to others than they offered her. These criminal solicitations, however, would probably have ceased in time, had not the jealousy of our young females interfered, and led to a most atrocious outrage. Our upright elders, collecting together a number of persons in the night, repaired to the house in which Manuschak dwelt with her husband, broke open the door, and gratified their lust by force. Her unfortunate husband, probably deeming himself also dishonoured, absconded the next day. This odious procedure soon became publicly known. The perpetrators were at no pains to conceal it, but boasted of what they had done, and even women assiduously propagated the story of the execrable deed. Manuschak could no longer quit her house, for the boys in the streets, shameless as their fathers, pursued her in troops, calling her the most ignominious names. This treatment she bore some days, and then fled at night from the place.—The pacha of Chnuss had, meanwhile, circulated the account of her flight in all quarters, and requested the pacha of Bajasit, in case Manuschak should be found in

his territories, either to put her to death or to send her to him. Carefully as the poor fugitive concealed herself at Baiasit she was soon discovered, and her beauty was reported to the son of the pacha. He sent for her, and made the most flattering overtures, but was solicitous that she should adopt the Mahometan faith, as that would be to him, a disciple of Mahomet's, the strongest proof that he might rely on her constancy and attachment. She rejected every thing—his wealth, his love, and his false prophet, and resisted his menaces also with heroic fortitude. He threw her into prison, and strove by tortures to force her compliance: among the rest she was burnt with red-hot irons: but she bore it all with resignation, and declared that she expected and wished for nothing but to suffer death for Jesus Christ. The pacha and his son then published it abroad, that Manuschak had once professed the Mahometan faith, but forsaken it to adopt the Christian religion, and that she audaciously refused to return to her former profession. She was on this ground condemned to be stoned, and conducted for that purpose to an open space out of the town, where its inhabitants and those of all the adjacent villages were assembled. The accused was placed in a sort of pit or hollow, and each person cast a stone at her.

The following night, some Mahometans, who resided in the nearest houses, observed a faint light rising from the spot where Manuschak was put to death. Curiosity impelled them to approach nearer, and they perceived a highly aromatic perfume which they had never before met with. Astonished at this circumstance they spread the report of it through the whole city. Both Mahometans and Christians now thronged to the place, and when they beheld the light and smelt the odour they were exceedingly amazed. On the following day the Armenians agreed to offer the pacha a sum of money for permission to remove the body of the martyr from the pit; and they thereupon interred it in the church of Zyranawor. The truth of these last particulars relative to Manuschak, as related to me by mine host, I investigated on the spot where she died, and where I actually found a hole with a vast quantity of stones, all of which were stained with blood. I then walked up and down the streets almost the whole day, making inquiries of every one who seemed likely to furnish information, and especially Mahometans, whom I regarded as more impartial witnesses in this case. All of them unanimously assured me that the facts were as above stated; and on such evidence I could not but be fully convinced, that

Manuschak, who had submitted to martyrdom for the sake of the Christian faith and her conjugal fidelity, had exalted herself to be one of the well-pleasing unto God.*

On the approach of evening I quitted Baiasit. On the hill I visited the church of Zyranawor, paid my homage to the holy Manuschak on the spot where she is interred, and passed the night in the village of Arzab, at the foot of the mountain, where is found a clay of extraordinary whiteness, with which vessels of all kinds are manufactured. There I met with a fellow-traveller, in whose company I arrived safely at Wagarschapat in the evening of the ensuing day.

Here I related all that I had seen and heard of Manuschak, but nobody would believe me, all being scandalized, as well on account of her having been a concubine to the Chan of Chnuss, as on account of the outrage which our villains had committed on her person. But the very next day they were thoroughly convinced; for the priests of Baiasit sent the patriarch a report, which confirmed every particular that I had related. The culprits ought to have been bowed down with shame; but, on the contrary, they had the hardihood to say: "God be praised

* That is to say, a saint.—*Translator.*

that it has turned out thus!"—that is, that Manuschak is become a saint.

Among us, married persons pay a capitation-tax of four rubles, and the single two rubles each. As soon as it was known that I had earned a ruble by the journey to Baiasit, it was hinted to the directing monk that, as I was now nearly of mature age, it was fit that my name should be enrolled in the tax-list; and as I had already earned money, they were of opinion that I ought to be rated not at two, but, like a married man, at four rubles. The monk was highly pleased with this suggestion, and instructed the collector to demand eight rubles for me and my brother. I gave all I had, amounting to about a ruble; but the director ordered me to be tormented till I had paid the rest, probably in hopes that the drops of my blood would be transformed into gold. My brother was so moved by this ill-usage, that he sold some very necessary articles of furniture to satisfy the rapacity of the monk and the hatred of our elders, and in this manner he released me from their clutches. In a few days, despairing of ever leading a quiet life and earning a subsistence in our place, he forsook home and wife, and retired to the village of Egward, about a day's journey to the north of Wagarschapat, where he hoped to gain

money, and even to be able to save some, by his profession. No sooner was my brother gone than they revenged themselves on me. I was sent out every day to husbandry-labour, so that, with the exception of Sunday and night, I had not an hour's rest.

On Ascension-day all the inhabitants of the district of Erivan assemble on a very lofty mountain, rather more than two days' journey to the north-east of our town. My mother and I went thither also on our ass, leaving my sister-in-law at home. The above-mentioned mountain is connected by a range of hills with the Arakat. Its summits are almost inaccessible, for the prodigious masses of rock rise almost perpendicularly. For the rest it affords delightful views, being every where clothed with herbs of different kinds, and among its flowers is the highly odoriferous *urz*. There are many deer and a still greater number of wild goats, which are remarkable for their horns, above an *arschine** and a half in length. These are much used by the Persians for musical horns, with which it is customary to call

* A Russian *arschine* contains 16 *werschoks*; 3 *arschines* are equal to 7 English feet: one *arschine* is therefore two feet four inches English measure.—*Translator.*

the people together to prayers and on other occasions, and which have a very agreeable tone. The mountain is divided, as it were, by a deep ravine, into which a small stream descends from the most elevated summit; this stream again loses itself at the foot of the opposite hill. High up, in one of the steep rocky declivities of this ravine, is a cavern formed by the hand of nature, to which there is no access but by the aid of ladders. The interior of the cavern is divided into two apartments, the first of which is capable of containing a hundred persons, and in the second, which is much smaller, divine service is performed on Ascension-day: beneath a hillock in the latter reposé, according to tradition, the remains of the blessed martyr, St. Barbara. On the left of this hillock is a small piece of standing water that never dries up. Here I investigated myself, with the utmost attention, the following extraordinary phænomenon. Beneath this cavern there is another of much smaller dimensions, from the roof of which, under the spot where the water stands in the upper cavern, drops are continually oozing. These drops fall upon men indiscriminately, but upon such women only as have had children; if any other female steps under the spot where a drop is just ready to fall, it runs farther, and

let her follow it as often as she will, the same thing is repeated. I witnessed an experiment of this kind, and can therefore attest the truth of this statement.

The pilgrims who resort hither for the purposes of devotion stay but two days. The object of this reverence paid to the illustrious martyr is with most the preservation of their children in the small-pox, for which reason they bring with them sheep and other animals fit for food as offerings.

Being desirous of seeing my brother, I left my mother to return home alone, and proceeded to Egward with some pilgrims from that place. A few wersts before we reached it, I observed by the road-side a number of sepulchral monuments, about nine *arschines* in height. I immediately requested a young fellow-traveller to accompany me, and we went together to inspect these monuments. They are the remains of an antient cemetery, called Ogus, that is, giant, or the place of giants. It is said, that at a very remote period this was the site of a large city. All the tombs are of extraordinary dimensions: one of them, which was somewhat decayed, measured two fathoms in length. My companion shewed me the bones of the person interred in it: the lower part of the arm from the fingers to the elbow

was upwards of a Persian *arschine* long, and this is about a third longer than the European, for seventy Persian *arschines* make one hundred European. The bone of the leg from the ancle to the knee reached up to my waist: hence some idea may be formed of the size of the whole body. I stood motionless for some time contemplating these perishable relics of the strength and vigour of past ages; and my mind was filled with painful emotions. Absorbed in meditations on the transitory nature of every thing under heaven, and on the nothingness of human power and pride, I finished my journey, and arrived at the house of my brother, who was very glad to see me. I was also rejoiced to find him for the first time content with his situation. He worked assiduously at his trade of shoemaking, and had plenty of custom. In the environs of Egward there grows a species of corn, the like to which is not to be seen in the whole country: it is not surpassed in whiteness by snow itself. The place contains nothing worth seeing but a lofty steeple with a great deal of good carved work. There are no rivers near it, but the inhabitants make shift with the rain-water, which descends from the mountains, and which they collect in a reservoir hewn for the purpose, whence it is conducted

by channels, in case of need, to the fields. After spending about a fortnight with my brother, I returned to Wagarschapat with an inhabitant of Egward, who was going to the Ararat. When we came to the river Karpi, whose rocky bank was there from forty to sixty fathoms in depth, my companion wished to persuade me to descend with him to the river, telling me that we should be certain to find among the stones something or other to repay us for our trouble. I naturally inquired how he could think of looking for any thing there. He replied, that in the year 1717 a battle was fought at this place between the Turkish Seraskier, Kiopro-Oglo-Pacha, and Topal Osman, Pacha of the Persians, and the troops of the former were almost entirely cut in pieces. The Turks were not acquainted with the situation of the place, and the Persian commander had, like an experienced general, contrived to draw them hither, and then collected all his force to rout them, and drive them into the river. In vain did the Turks perceive their error and their danger; in vain did they muster their last remains of strength; they were defeated. The victory gave the Persians possession of the city of Erivan, which had previously belonged to their antagonists. I had no doubt from all this that there might be something to

be picked up; and from the multitude of human bones which lay every where about, I could form some conception of the prodigious number of Turks who had perished on the occasion; but, notwithstanding all this, I felt not the least inclination to venture my life, and either to break my neck or be bitten by a venomous serpent. My companion, however, returned with whole bones, and actually brought back with him a silver ring, and some small sword-ornaments of the same metal.

It was not till late at night that I reached home. The harvest had begun, and the corn wanted reaping. I was again driven off with all the other poor people to labour day and night, sometimes in the fields belonging to the convent, at others in those of the elders. The heat was intense; and as we were not suffered to go home, excepting on Sundays, we were obliged to make shift chiefly with dry food. They gave us to eat a very salt fish, called *taregch*, which is brought hither from the lake of Achtamar, in the Turkish province of Wann. Owing, not so much to the heat as to this kind of food, we were tormented with incessant thirst, which we strove to allay by means of water and fruit; but these bloated us to such a degree, that, had we not gained some respite from our severe labour, we must inevitably have perished. In the day-

time we were not merely scorched by the sun, but tormented by the horse-fly, and at night thousands of gnats, and the continual danger of being stung by scorpions and bitten by snakes, left us not a moment's rest. In this occupation we were engaged upwards of two months, till about the middle of August.

But not long before the expiration of this time, something extremely painful occurred in my own family. My mother fell out with my sister-in-law. The most violent quarrels daily took place between them, till at length the neighbours exhorted me to endeavour to restore peace, since I had a right to remonstrate with both, and they would doubtless listen to me because I was a scholar, and therefore knew best what arguments to employ. To confess the truth, these squabbles vexed me exceedingly; for, after slaving the whole week in the fields, when I came home but for a day, I had no quiet there neither. I had frequently read, heard, and even myself observed, that a hundred men may live together without differing, but if there are only two women in a house it is in vain to expect harmony: now I was destined to have this truth confirmed by painful experience in the bosom of my own family. At the urgent importunity of the neighbours, I was nevertheless obliged to make a serious effort to reconcile my mother and sister-

in-law, and considered whose cause it would be best for me to espouse. If, said I to myself, I declare against the latter, she, as being more of a stranger, will disregard the truth of my representations, and complain to the neighbours and also to my brother, that my mother and I have united in his absence to oppress and annoy her, and in this manner disharmony and even hatred may be produced between us and my brother. My mother, on the other hand, will not be so much offended by the counsel and remonstrances of her son, and her favourite into the bargain; nay, thus did I argue with myself in my hopes, my mediation will even be agreeable to her, and so I shall gain without much trouble the character of peace-maker, as well with them as with my brother and the neighbours. Unluckily it turned out the very reverse, and my mother, though one of the best of women, was nevertheless a very woman. On Sunday two female neighbours were sitting with us, and the only topic of their conversation was the war which my mother was waging with her daughter-in-law; when, agreeably to the idea I had formed of the duty incumbent on me as mediator, I addressed myself to my mother. The exordium of my lecture contained an excuse for presuming to give her advice, and I expressed a hope that she would take it in

good part, and not be angry with me for what I was going to say. I then represented to her that such broils not only robbed her of her peace, but rendered us a scandal and a disgrace to our neighbours and to the whole town; that every body spoke to me on the subject in terms of the severest reprehension, and blamed me exceedingly for not contriving means to reconcile them, and for suffering my poor sister-in-law to be abused without cause; that my brother himself would take it highly amiss, and we should involve ourselves in quarrels, and even in enmity with him. If, however, the young woman was really too pert and too obstinate, it was owing to her youth and simplicity, and to her not having yet learned patience; while she, a woman of experience, who, in the course of her life had seen both good and evil, and therefore possessed sounder judgment, ought to make allowances for the ignorance of her daughter-in-law; to give her the necessary directions with temper, at least for the sake of her husband, who was her own son; and to set her a pattern of forbearance at any rate till the return of my brother. I should have gone on with my lecture, had not my mother by this time lost all patience: she regarded my interference as the consequence of a peculiar partiality for my sister-in-law, flew into the most violent passion,

and accused me of the blackest ingratitude in return for all the care she had bestowed on me and my education. Our neighbours at first represented to her that there was no foundation for her charge against me; but when they found that she would not listen to them, they concluded their remonstrance with a sarcastic laugh, and left us to continue our warfare alone. My mother's accusations and reproaches affected me the more sensibly, as she had never before given me even an angry word: I strove therefore, to the utmost of my power to pacify her, assuring her with tears that I had not the slightest intention to displease her, but merely to make peace and to reconcile her with her daughter-in-law for our mutual happiness, which could not subsist without domestic harmony. My mother gradually cooled, and began to be sorry that she had said so much about me before strangers; but her sorrow came too late. Our visitors had lost no time in spreading what they had heard over the whole neighbourhood, and before night it was currently reported in more than seven hundred houses, that I was the most unfeeling and ungrateful of creatures, to which it was charitably added, that I was living in illicit intercourse with my brother's wife. The troubles of my life, previously almost intolerable, were now aggravated, inasmuch as I could not stir a

step without being assailed by abuse and contumely from old and young. Every one who passed pointed at me, saying: Look, there goes such a one, who has done so and so, though he is a scholar and is acquainted with the Scriptures, and knows what is right and wrong.—The moment I appeared in the street, the boys pursued me in troops with shouts and taunts, and even pelted me with stones. In short, I was persecuted by all; there was none to comfort me, to speak a single word in my vindication, or to say that he disbelieved the tales told concerning me—none but my second teacher, to whom I betook myself on the Sunday. He alone endeavoured to cheer me, and exhorted me to bear this affliction, brought upon me in an evil hour by my mother, with resignation and without a murmur, for it was wrong in any case to cherish animosity against a mother; and I might then be assured of enjoying the divine favour. He did not fail, however, to reprove my mother for having exposed me to such unmerited disgrace. She had nothing to urge in excuse, but that she was exceedingly incensed at the time, and was now sorry for what she had said.

A situation so cruel totally destroyed my peace of mind. My feelings were like the muddy waters of a stream which has overflowed its banks. I could not rightly love my mother—

and still I did love her with the warmest affection—and I could scarcely bear our house. When I was there every thing seemed quite strange to me, and I interfered in nothing. I was generally with my master when not at work, and sometimes with my sister. My poor mother saw and felt my deplorable situation; she was sensible of the wrong she had done me, and bitterly repented it: but she had not the power to comfort me, nor the spirit to take any effective step for that purpose, neither could she devise any means to deliver me from the almost momentary humiliations to which she had exposed me. In short, we lived together in the most uncomfortable manner; and to make matters still worse, I was soon destined to suffer the severest wound from the quarter for which I had involved myself in all this misery. I had frequently remarked certain domestic irregularities in my sister-in-law, and at length determined to speak to her on the subject; but this refractory woman warmly replied, that I was not the master of the house, that she had a husband, and I had not the least right to take her to task. After this I thought it better not to go home at all, but spent my time with my sister and my master. The latter, who was acquainted with my disposition, and attached to me, advised me to avoid as much as possible the

risk of fresh affronts, and to take up my quarters with him; nay, he at length exhorted me rather to quit the town altogether: but I was well aware that, were my attainments ever so considerable, they would not procure me either regard or even a morsel of bread among ignorant strangers, and that any handicraft business would be far more serviceable; but unfortunately I knew none. In this manner did I pass the autumn and winter. At the commencement of spring, feeling more and more keenly the impossibility of remaining longer in the town, I resolved to go to Aschtarak, a day's journey, or about forty wersts distant from us, for the purpose of seeking employment there as a gardener. I actually met with a situation of this kind with a man of considerable property, who possessed several vineyards, one of which I took charge of. For our place I certainly had a tolerable knowledge of gardening; but there, though it is not far distant, they have a very different mode of cultivating the vine, on account of the water and the climate. My master's brother conducted me to the vineyard consigned to my care, and gave me some directions. The terms on which persons engage themselves in this capacity at Aschtarak are commonly these:—the gardener defrays the current expenses till the fruit is ripe, and then shares the produce equally with

his master. In our country the gardens are generally surrounded on all four sides with walls of the height that hedges usually are in other places. That which I superintended was walled on three sides only, and was bounded in the rear by the river Karpi, which here flows with a pretty strong current, but has not such steep, craggy banks as near the village of Egward. Owing to this situation of my garden there was certainly some danger to be apprehended from wild beasts, and especially from wolves, which are extremely rapacious with us, and frequently attack men, springing upon them from behind out of their lurking-places among the rocks. Hence it was necessary for me to be constantly upon my guard. At night I slept in a tree, usually taking up my lodgings in an apricot-tree. Disregarding this inconvenience, I went cheerfully about my work, and lived quite happily in my garden. In such a garden it is the vine alone that requires attention; the other fruit-trees give no trouble. The vintage commenced in the month of August, when the other fruits also were ripe, and I looked forward with pleasure to the division with my master for my remuneration. All at once, however, there arrived at Aschtarak an order from the Chan of Erivan, requiring that town to furnish forty pack-horses with the needful attend-

ants, for the transport of provisions from the district of Scharur, to the citadel of Erivan. Similar orders were issued throughout all Erivan, because Aga-Mohammed-Chan, Shah of Persia, had marched with his troops from Tegran, his capital, to occupy Erivan; for this reason the Chan was desirous of provisioning the fortress for seven years. Besides its own inhabitants, this fortress is generally garrisoned with four thousand Persians and three thousand Armenians. Each of them is allowed to have only his wife with him; the children being left behind in the care of their nearest relatives and friends, to spare the place the necessity of feeding so many useless mouths.

The Shah advanced against Erivan, because the then Chan had thrown off his allegiance to him, concluded an alliance with Heraklios as his nearest neighbour, and paid tribute to the latter; in return for which Heraklios had promised to protect him in every emergency against the Shah. I was sent by my master as one of the forty persons required. On the way my companions, being natives of Aschtarak, would not speak to me out of envy and hatred, because I came from Wagarschapat; gave me incessant proofs of their ill-will; and even threatened to beat me. My horse was a very good one, and I strove to keep in such a position with regard to

them as to be able to get ahead of them in case of necessity. Fortunately, however, there was no occasion for this, and we arrived without accident at the place of our destination. Here we had nothing to eat but bread, and not even sufficient of that. I went therefore, according to my custom, directly to the church, where I read and sung, and did not forget to ask the priests a few questions. All present eyed me with respect, and the priests could not help inviting me to their houses, and entertaining me, and on my account my companions also were well received. This, thought I, will produce some alteration in their behaviour towards me; but it was just the reverse: their innate antipathy increased in proportion to their envy of the distinction that was shown to me.

Next day we received our load of wheat at the rate of nearly eight *pud* (a Russian *pud* contains nearly forty pounds) for each horse, and set off on our return. The priests, who seemed at least to have conceived a fondness for me, accompanied me; and as I came from the town belonging to the convent, and had lived twice in the latter, they took it into their heads that I might be serviceable to them there, and begged me, in case of emergency, not to leave them; on which, as may easily be conceived, my companions were quite beside themselves with envy. With our

loaded horses we could not reach our journey's end the same day, and were therefore obliged to pass the night on the road. On the following morning I was not able to lift my sacks of four *pud* weight upon the horse by myself, and my companions long withstood my urgent entreaties, accompanied even with tears, till at last some of them, induced rather by fear of the consequences of leaving me behind by the way, helped me up with my load.

At Erivan I was involved in fresh embarrassment. To empty the wheat out of the sacks we were obliged to mount by means of ladders upon the walls, for the granaries were constructed in the latter, and apertures left for the admission of the corn. All the others carried up and emptied their sacks; but I, not being strong enough to do so too, begged first one then another to help me, but none of them deigned even to make a reply. Their ill-nature was fortunately observed by the Chan's Targa Dschafar, (governor in chief of the fortress,) who, when they had all discharged their loads, and I was standing there with my sacks, which I could not drag up alone, approached with his whole retinue, ordered my comrades to be saluted with the whip, and called out to them: "Ye ill-natured envious scoundrels! why will ye not help this poor fellow?" What have others

to expect of you, when ye behave thus to professors of the same religion with yourselves?"—He ordered them to carry up and empty my sacks; by way of punishment, he directed them to carry back timber for the house which the Chan was building at Scharur; and to vex them still more, he bade me mount one of his horses before their eyes, and to attend him to his country-seat Damir Bulag.

He there presented me to the chief of his wives, to whom he related what had happened to me; she seemed to be a woman of much feeling, and received me very graciously. I was supplied with abundance of savoury refreshments; and then, at the desire of the lady, I described to her my situation, and related the principal events of my life. Her sympathy was thereby more strongly excited, so that she earnestly entreated her husband to keep me about him, and to give me some good appointment. Dschafar was a kind-hearted man, and, as I had seen from his treatment of my companions, a just man also. He was very ready to comply with the desire of his wife, and told me that if I would enter into his service, he would make me superintendent of his village, with a salary of one hundred rubles a year. This was a remarkably beautiful village, scarcely four wersts distant from the city. I thanked him and his lady for

their bounty, assuring them that I should not have the least hesitation to accept the proffered favour, if my circumstances permitted; adding, that I could not quit my master without his consent, as I had still to finish the business which I had undertaken, and to receive the remuneration due to me—besides which, I must also apprize my mother of my good-fortune, and obtain her blessing. Dschafar was perfectly satisfied, and to give me a token of his especial favour and to vex the people of Aschtarak, he instantly sent orders thither that the work I had yet to do for my master should be performed by the town, and my share of the profit paid down immediately. He told me likewise, that if I pleased I might bring my mother and brother; that they might both live comfortably with me, and should be provided for. These kind and bountiful offers moved me to the bottom of my heart. I threw myself at his feet with the profoundest gratitude, and set out for Aschtarak. Dschafar's orders had been already received there, and had so alarmed my master, that he was afraid to admit me into his house. "No, no, my friend," said he, coming out to me at the door; "such an uproar has been raised by thee in the whole town on account of a trifle, that I am fearful of having any thing to do with thee, lest I should bring upon myself some misfortune or other.

Go home for God's sake; all thy work shall be done for thee here, and send thy brother for thy share of the produce." My master in his fright did not venture to ask me for his horse; I might have kept him. On the other hand I was grieved to part from so good a man.

On reaching Wagarschapat I first went to my teacher, told him every thing, and begged him to persuade my mother to consent to my going to Targa Dschafar. But though the advantages likely to accrue to me and mine from this connexion seemed to him to be very great, still he did not fail to represent to me all the dangers with which it would probably be attended. He was of opinion, that earlier or later the Persians, envious of the appointment of an Armenian to the superintendence of the domains of so distinguished a person, would bring some charge or other against me; and that, in consequence, I should be tormented in the manner customary among the Persians to compel me to embrace their religion; but, notwithstanding these objections, he promised to speak to my mother on the subject. She was highly displeased on hearing of my intention, and as she was apprehensive from her own experience that I might actually be induced to forsake the Christian faith, she pronounced the severest malediction upon me in

case I should enter into the service of Dschafar. I was in consequence obliged to relinquish my purpose: but now it was to be feared that Dschafar would send in quest of me in order to revenge himself on me for rejecting his offers: while, on the other hand, I was not safe from injury or from death itself on the part of the people of Aschtarak. I was, therefore, necessitated to keep myself secreted at home without venturing abroad at all, except to my teacher, and that only in the evening. Meanwhile my business at Aschtarak was brought to a termination, and my brother received the portion coming to me, at which I was greatly rejoiced; for my profits amounted to what in our estimation was a considerable sum. Dschafar had, in a few weeks, actually inquired concerning me of the messengers dispatched weekly by the patriarch to ask after his health; and they had told him, agreeably to the report purposely circulated, that I had gone over to the Turkish side. Not long afterwards, while I was considering where to seek an asylum, two of my old school-fellows called to see me. These, out of love and sympathy, advised me to repair to the convent of the blessed martyr, St. Ripsima, and there enter into the service of Sagak, the archbishop, who had returned about a year before from Jeru-

salem, with whom none of the monks could bear to stay, and who would himself be glad to take a person not belonging to the convent. Following this counsel I went next day to the monastery, and was introduced to Sagak, who, at his advanced age, being upwards of eighty, was extremely weak and infirm, owing to the various hardships which he had suffered in the course of his life. At his desire I briefly related to him all that had hitherto happened to me, and gave him an account of my then situation. He thereupon asked on what terms I was willing to enter into his service. In consequence of what I had been told concerning the difficulty of pleasing him, I merely requested permission to attend him for a month or two that he might try whether I suited him, adding that I should be satisfied with whatever he thought fit to give me, as all I sought was protection from the malice and oppression of my countrymen. He was pleased with my answer. "Very well, my friend," said he; "I see already that thou wilt stay with me as long as I live."

He had a cell in the convent built expressly for his accommodation after his arrival, and divided into three apartments. I had every thing to do for him, and was very attentive to my duty. Every day I read the morning and

evening service to him, and he made many useful observations concerning religious matters. I was his only companion, for no one visited him, or more correctly speaking, he would not admit any visitors. Occasionally he would take a ride on the same ass on which he had performed the journey hither from Jerusalem. This animal would not suffer any person to ride him but his holiness, and if any one else attempted to mount him he would make a most lamentable outcry. I had not been long with him when he spoke to me on the subject of wages. "Thou knowest," said he, "that the chief servants of the convent, the patriarch's body-guard, who surround him armed when he goes abroad, are paid only sixteen rubles a year; I will give thee two hundred: but as thou art still young, and mightst spend thy money imprudently, I will buy thee in spring a garden and a mill." I was extremely rejoiced at this promise, not that I reckoned upon possessing a garden and a mill, for I well knew that at his death they would be taken from me, but expecting that by his kindness I should be supplied with money, and in this particular I was not disappointed. Sagak was extremely fond of me, and I shared with him, if I may so express myself, the remnant of his closing life. He frequently

gave me ten or twenty rubles at a time, when he heard of any urgent want in my family, so that by Christmas I had received from him one hundred and sixty rubles, of which sum I had given a good deal to my brother, but still more to my mother. I had spent scarcely any of it for myself; for Sagak provided me abundantly with clothes. My mother and brother lived in comfort, but had to use the greatest circumspection towards our elders and the other inhabitants. Sagak sent me sometimes in my best suit to Wagarschapat, not upon any particular business, but merely, as I conceive, to check the hatred and malignity of my townsfolk, and especially of the rich. I also rode thither on his ass to purchase provisions, and took good care to exhibit myself in my fine clothes to our elders; on which occasions I had almost always the gratification to hear the gnashing of their teeth. The short distance at which I lived with a man so distinguished and so universally respected, and his manifest partiality for me, closed those lips which otherwise would have overflowed with calumnies against me; and whenever I appeared in the town my enemies durst not show me the slightest degree of ill-will.

Sagak was attended every Saturday by an ecclesiastic, to whom he confessed, and who

administered the holy sacrament to him. On one of these occasions he praised my zeal and fidelity, called me his son, and earnestly requested his confessor to protect me after his decease from all molestation and oppression, and to make known to all these his favourable sentiments towards me. He certainly foresaw that I should be suspected of having enriched myself in his service, and that attempts would be made to compel me to give up all I had received from him; hence his pecuniary presents, to enable me to withdraw from their persecutions, after providing for the comfort of my family. But this precaution of my venerable patron served to discover to me still more clearly my future danger, and seduced me—for I will not conceal any thing from the reader—into the commission of a crime. I thought it advisable, namely, to contribute on my part towards obviating the danger of which my benefactor was so apprehensive. According to Sagak's own words, I was thoroughly convinced, that, after his death, every thing would be taken from me, and that, let him bequeath to me by his will as much as he would, yet no part of it would ever come into my possession. The more I was persuaded of this unpleasant truth, the more I was resolved to take my own measures to prevent its accom-

plishment. My conscience made a very feeble resistance, or rather no resistance at all, to my plan. I encouraged myself with the idea that the monks, who gave themselves no concern about Sagak, had much less right to his property than I had, and purloined one of his jewels, an emerald ring: but when I had taken it, I was puzzled how to dispose of my prize. To place it in the care of my mother was what I durst not even think of; my brother also would have been far from approving what I had done; and, therefore, notwithstanding my quarrel with my sister-in-law, I thought it best to deposit the ring with her, flattering her with great promises in case she kept the pledge committed to her charge a profound secret. She was, however, too much of a woman to refrain long from mentioning the ring to at least one female friend. It was immediately surmised that the ring came from me, and that I had undoubtedly stolen it from the bishop. Luckily I heard of this before the suspicion could reach his ears. I obtained the ring from my sister-in-law, upon the pretext that I had found a better, which I would bring her, and put it where I had found it. Presently some of our people, rejoicing in the opportunity of ruining me, came to our convent to beg Sagak's blessing. They durst not

acquaint him with their real errand, but communicated it to several of the monks, adding, that I had certainly stolen a great deal from him already, and would not fail to steal a great deal more. My benefactor placed far too much confidence in me to believe the charge, and was extremely angry with them for inventing such a groundless accusation: at length, however, he ordered me to bring his jewel-box, and when he found the ring safe in it he was perfectly convinced of my innocence. For my part, I heartily thanked God for having turned away from me so deep a disgrace. My own conscience, nevertheless, reproached me long and severely for this crime, and I confessed it to the former archbishop of Russia, the present patriarch Jephrem.

Thus did I continue to enjoy the favours of my excellent employer, who supplied me liberally with money, while I in return served him with the utmost zeal and assiduity. At the beginning of March, 1795, the patriarch Luka and many bishops and monks went, as usual, to Erivan, to the great Persian festival of Bairam, which commenced on the 10th of that month. The patriarch, who was accustomed to visit the bishop every fortnight, did not fail, at this time, to call upon him, but found him extremely weak. Foreseeing his

speedy dissolution, he solicited his blessing and forgiveness for all the vexations he had caused him; for, added he, it is possible that we see one another for the last time. Sagak replied, that, agreeably to the law of Christ, he had studied to pay him obedience with all the respect due to his high functions: "but," continued he, "in the certainty of my approaching dissolution, I have but one request to make to your holiness, which is, that you will extend your protection to my servant here, (pointing to me,) and not suffer him to be in any manner molested or oppressed after my decease." The patriarch could do no other than promise to fulfil this his last request. His holiness then turned to me, and gave me hopes that he would not forsake me, but provide handsomely for me: admonishing me in the mean time to continue to serve the archbishop with the same fidelity as heretofore, and to render him all the assistance in my power under his infirmities.

A month before this visit Sagak had, in one of his excursions, fixed upon a spot for his grave, in the domains of the convent, on the road to Erivan, and had composed an inscription to be hewn in stone. During the whole time of my service he had not ceased to pray to God, with great contrition of heart and many

tears, to grant him an easy end, which now seemed to draw very near, inasmuch as he had, previously to the visit of the patriarch, become so weak, that when he only wanted to sit upright I was obliged to support him. At length, on the morning of the 10th of March, he pronounced the prayer, which is read in our church on Maundy-Thursday previously to confession, on his knees, and with his eyes immoveably directed towards heaven; and on finishing the prayer, he added with a serene countenance: "I am now going to the communion of the saints, my brethren who have gone before me,"—naming several deceased bishops, his predecessors. To the last moment he kept admonishing me not to yield to the allurement of the vanities of the world, but to be ever mindful of the law of God, to treasure it in my heart, and to walk conformably to his commandments. At the conclusion he raised his voice and said: "My beloved son, I leave thee peace and blessing!" This address moved me to the bottom of my heart; I strove to check my tears, for I wished to say something to him, but could only ejaculate: "Father! Father!"—He made no answer; I touched him: he had expired—his last words were addressed to me—"I leave thee peace and blessing!"

Three days before his dissolution he had taken the holy sacrament, and at the same time directed that thirty rubles of the money he might leave should be paid to me, probably with a view that it might be supposed I had previously received little or nothing from him, and in hopes that this sum, which was not considerable, would be paid to me without difficulty. Joannes, the eldest archimandrite of the convent, who had long been a particular favourite of Sagak's, had gone with the rest to the Persian festival; I therefore took the ass without delay, rode to Etschmiazyn, and gave information of Sagak's decease. All the remaining bishops and monks, as well as the ecclesiastics of the adjacent places, attended his funeral. His remains were interred on the spot chosen by himself, and seals put upon his effects: but I remained in the convent till the return of the patriarch from Erivan. Of all that the deceased possessed, I took nothing but his inkstand and his comb for keepsakes, and those I concealed in the church-yard.

In the time of the patriarch Simeon, Sagak was the oldest archbishop at Etschmiazyn. He was born in the village of Parak in Nachitschewan, and brought up in the convent of the holy apostle Thaddæus. This convent is situated in the province of Mak, and is the

next in rank to Etschmiazyn. I was acquainted with the events of his life, partly from what I had heard before I lived with him, but chiefly from his own accounts. He was a man of firm character, a lover of justice, but rather too impetuous when he was engaged in the defence of the truth: he was kind-hearted, and a mortal enemy to oppression of every kind, and hence he had much to suffer from it himself. When, after Simeon's death, Luka obtained the patriarchal chair, Sagak displeased him by some just remonstrances which he made, and had thenceforward to endure a variety of vexations. But, that I may not absolutely violate the respect due to such a dignified ecclesiastical personage as a patriarch, I think it right not to expatiate farther on this subject, but shall mention only some of the principal circumstances as related to me by Sagak himself. Between two and three years after Luka's elevation to the patriarchate, Sagak was obliged to remove to Jerusalem, where he resided five years. Luka, in token of reconciliation, recalled him, and appointed him his deputy in the convent of St. Thaddæus. To the diocese of this convent belong the capital of the province of Mak, of the same name, the province of Baiasit, part of the province of Erivan beyond the river Erasch, and part of

the province of Choi. The first and last of these are under the dominion of Persia. Sagak, with a view to lighten the burdens of the inhabitants of his eparchy, modified various dues payable to the convent, repressed the exactions of the clergy, watched vigilantly over the conduct and repose of the flock committed to his care, and was a zealous persecutor of such of our nation as had embraced popery, and strove to sow the seeds of discord and heresy among the rest of the people. These wretches were almost all driven out of his diocese and exterminated. All the inhabitants, rich and poor, Christians and Mahometans, sincerely respected and loved Sagak: but this at length involved him in fresh disquietudes, occasioned by some of the Pacha's principal officers. Sagak was necessitated to return to Jerusalem, where he this time passed seven or eight years.

During his second absence the following wonderful event occurred:—For five successive years, as if for a punishment because some of the people of Baiasit had entered into the intrigue against Sagak, not a drop of oil, which is there made of linseed, *kenschut*, *kenapla*, and *kertschak**, was produced in that

* These three seem to be genuine Armenian names, and are not to be found in the Russian dictionary. The original

district. During those five years all these plants were quite barren. The inhabitants of the province justly ascribed this effect to the divine wrath, on account of the ill-treatment of Sagak, and on this point both Mahometans and Christians were of one opinion: so that, at length, the most distinguished of the former besought the patriarch in writing to restore Sagak to them, or at least to prevail upon him to send them his blessing. The patriarch, feeling his age and infirmity, was himself desirous of accommodating differences, in which almost all had sided with Sagak, on account of his piety and virtues. Luka therefore wrote to him at the solicitation of the Persians and of the whole province, and requested him to come to Etschmiazyn. On receiving this letter, Sagak sent only the blessing applied for by the inhabitants of Baiasit, for themselves and the whole of his former diocese; but he declined returning to Etschmiazyn and begged the patriarch to allow him to finish his days in peace at Jerusalem.

---

gives the following description of the *kertschak*: In the berry it has a great resemblance to coffee, and is so greasy, that it yields an oil when merely rubbed between the fingers. It possesses a strong cathartic property, and is used for burning only.—*Translator.*

After the people of Baiasit had received the blessing of Sagak, which they so ardently desired, they obtained in the ensuing sixth year an incredible abundance of oil, which served to impress the hearts of the people with more profound veneration for him than ever. The very Mahometans reverenced him as a man truly well-pleasing unto God. Luka wrote to him a second time, desiring him to return, but Sagak again excused himself. These repeated refusals were the more painful to the patriarch, as they were likely to give the people very unfavourable impressions in regard to him, and to lead to all sorts of inferences to his disadvantage. He wrote to him a third time, interdicting, in case of a fresh refusal, the exercise of the episcopal functions and the use of the ecclesiastical habit. This letter passed, like the preceding, through the hands of Joakim, patriarch of Jerusalem, who had also been written to on the subject. Joakim entertained a sincere esteem for the venerable prelate, and therefore, to avoid wounding his feelings, he withheld from him the mandate of the patriarch. He kept back the letter, and applied to Zacharias, patriarch of Constantinople, who knew and likewise esteemed Sagak. Zacharias wrote to Luka, and observed to him, that it was not right to treat dignified eccle-

siastics, who were under the protection of another potentate, in such an arbitrary and despotic manner, and if he did not change this imperious tone, Sagak was fully justified in refusing obedience to his commands, and disclaiming his authority. During this correspondence, the Armenian Catholics or Papists heard of the patriarch's last letter, and immediately sought to avail themselves of this circumstance to incense the aged prelate to the highest degree, in expectation that they might then induce him to forsake the Armenian church, and acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. With professions of esteem and respect they accordingly revealed to him what Luka had written; then invited him to embrace the Catholic faith, and to acknowledge the Pope as the head of the church, offering him, among other things, a pension of ten ducats a day, and promising to send him to Rome enveloped in cotton, indicating by that expression, that the utmost possible attention should be paid to his comfort and convenience. Sagak heard them out, and then, from the recesses of his heart, he returned this answer to their treacherous poposals;—"Do ye know who it is that commands me?—So far from being offended with him, I bow to him with reverence, as to the will of the supreme patriarch, the first

dignitary of the church. As the head, as the ruler plenipotentiary, set over us by God himself, he has not merely a right to command me to ride to him, but he might, if he pleased, order me to be dragged to him bound with my face to the earth: it would be my duty to submit without a murmur, and this very hour I shall set out for Etschmiazyn." To give due weight to this answer Sagak, irritated as he was, pulled off his slipper, and with it struck the Jesuit, who had made him such flattering offers, several times over the mouth, adding: "This I do to impress my answer upon you the more strongly, that you may not forget to repeat it correctly to him who has sent you to tempt me to betray my church and my legitimate superior." Hereupon he rode straightway to Joakim, reprimanded him for withholding the last command of the patriarch, distributed all his money among the churches, and in a few days set out for Etschmiazyn. Thus did Sagak exhibit a pattern of the most implicit subjection to superior authority, and acquire the admiration and esteem of the two partriarchs of Constantinople and Jerusalem, and of all the Armenians in the latter city.

The patriarch Luka, being informed of his approach, dispatched all the officers of the convent and the singers to the distance of four

wersts to meet him, in order to show how highly he honoured him. Sagak, however, persevered in his humility, and would not pursue his way, but sent to the patriarch requesting that, instead of any ceremony, he would give him his blessing. The patriarch himself went out of the fortress to receive him, and having there greeted him with his blessing, he led him directly to the church, where Sagak prostrated himself before him and kissed his feet. Luka was desirous of keeping him with him, but Sagak requested that, for the sake of quiet, he might be permitted to retire to the convent of St. Ripsima, and that the archimandrite Joannes, who had been with him in the convent of St. Thaddæus, might be removed thither as chief overseer. His wishes were complied with; and Sagak built a cell there for himself, in which he lived peaceably till his death.

I waited therefore in expectation that the patriarch on his return would call at this cell, but was disappointed. He passed by, and proceeded straightway to Etschmiazyn; and according to a rule which has subsisted for a very long period, all Sagak's effects were sent after him to the convent. The patriarch had manifestly forgotten me and his promise, and it is likely enough that in a few days Sagak

himself escaped his memory. Thus was I deprived even of that which Sagak had expressly bequeathed to me, and returned to my own town. There I was silly enough to parade about in my fine new dress, totally unmindful that I had now no friend or protector, and with a view to excite the envy of our rich people. My teacher and some others rebuked me for my indiscretion, and advised me to sell every thing as speedily as possible, and to keep only what was of the utmost necessity. This advice I strictly followed, and left myself only just not naked or barefoot; that is to say, I kept among other things a couple of pair of good stockings; in fact I had nothing but what was good, but these stockings soon became the cause of fresh sufferings.

I was one day passing the convent of Etschmiazyn. The former director of our town was dead, and his successor was unluckily sitting with some of the inhabitants of the place before the gate of the convent. He inquired who I was; and they told him I was the son of a poor widow, but had been in Sagak's service for some time before his death. They were not long in coming to the conclusion that I had robbed him, and was now showing off at his expense. Regardless of the well-known fact that Sagak had shown me many favours, that he took a pride

in clothing me in the best manner, and that all I had was his gift, they ran up, seized me, and dragged me before the director. By his command I was bound to a chain stretched across the gateway, and beaten with sticks on the soles of the feet, the director at the same time admonishing me to confess all the thefts I had committed. I called the whole town to witness that Sagak himself had given me whatever was necessary; but the rapacious monk would not listen to this, being only desirous to ascertain whether I had any thing that he should like to possess, which, in that case, he would doubtless have taken from me. I endured my sufferings with the fortitude inspired by the prophetic prediction of my excellent patron. Nevertheless, according to their laudable custom, they did not cease to beat me tell my voice failed. Somewhat satisfied for the present with my torments, the monk said he would give me three days to recover myself, but on the fourth I must come to him to the convent to be a menial servant there; and if I did not obey, he would order me to be beaten to death in the town. While they were thus maltreating me, my sister's husband came up, and as soon as I was unbound, he took me on his back and carried me home, where I arrived more dead than alive. I was obliged to keep my bed for a fortnight. One day, my teacher and some of

my former schoolfellows being with me, they unanimously advised me rather to remove to some other country, than to expose myself to the repetition of such outrages. I was more deeply sensible of this necessity than any of them, but, from an extraordinary innate curiosity, I was reluctant to quit my native land till I had seen the antiquities of which I had heard so much. My brother was going to Erivan; I begged him to take me with him, and afterwards to accompany me to the convent of Kegard, situated on a mountain, about a day's journey eastward of Erivan, and which was built by Tiridates, king of Armenia. I prevailed upon another inquisitive person to go along with me. We were all on horseback. When my brother had transacted his business at Erivan, we pursued our course to Kegard, and passed the village of Tcherves, which belongs to Dschafar, whose steward I was to have been. We slept at the village of Nork, where fine stone-ware is made, and where there are flourishing vineyards. Next day we saw at a distance the ruins of the ancient Armenian capital, Karpi, which was seated on the elevated bank of the river of the same name. The whole surrounding country is now a desert, but has still a considerable number of fruit-trees; we durst not approach nearer, for fear partly of robbers and partly of wild beasts,

which generally abound in places where there is fruit, of which they reap the exclusive benefit.

At no great distance from this hill are still to be seen the ruins of an ancient fortress, erected about 1500 years ago, by the Armenian king Tiridates. It was of stone, and there is every reason to believe that it was demolished solely for the sake of the lead and iron by which the stones were united together. Many still come hither for lead to make bullets; and others carry away stones for stoves and furnaces, because they are capable of bearing very intense heat. We then ascended the hill and came to the river Kegard, which precipitates itself from the top to a projection of the hill, and thence falls as a cascade to the bottom, at such a distance from the declivity, that the spectator may stand between it and the water as in a vast lantern, which affords a highly pleasing and at the same time, magnificent spectacle. Its roar was to my ear at least extremely harmonious, but so powerful that, when you are near it, you must raise your voice to the highest pitch, and then perhaps the person to whom you are speaking can only catch a word here and there. The convent of Kegard, or the Spear, was founded by king Tiridates, and named after the spear with which our Saviour was pierced, and which is still preserved at Etschmiazyn. It is

entirely of the reddish stone of the country, which is rather soft, but impermeable to wet. The building is yet in very good condition, though it is scarcely possible to calculate how many centuries it has been uninhabited. Higher up the hill there is a singular church, called Arsakan, whether from the place or the founder I cannot tell. It is hewn out of the solid rock, and has a cupola. It contains nothing of foreign materials, or that has been brought into it from other places; for the very images of the saints are cut out of the rock, as is likewise the cupola. The light is admitted by an aperture at the top. It would hold about two hundred persons. On the left side of the church, but in the same rock, is a large cavern, whether hewn by art or formed by the hand of nature I do not precisely know, in which we saw some bones of persons who had been buried there: but in the centre of the cavern there is an open spring of uncommonly pure and pleasant, but very cold water. The air in the church is also extremely cold, but perfectly fresh, and, as far as I could perceive, not at all damp. The principal cemetery, as may still be observed, was underneath. This edifice must have cost not less labour than money. Higher up, about the convent and church, are to be seen many hermitages, in one of which I found between the stones much fluid

bitumen of a black colour. When I removed some of it, the place was immediately supplied by fresh, whence we may infer that it is very abundant. The situation of the hill is extremely pleasant, and it is thickly studded with fruit-trees, especially filberts. Here are also found several species of wild animals, as deer, wolves, bears, and others. Persians, who frequent the place for the sake of hunting, assert, that they have often seen on the hill a light like a lamp, which, when they approached the spot where it seemed to be burning, disappeared and left them in the dark. On our return we again slept at Nork, and next day arrived at Erivan. Here I earnestly entreated my brother to visit the Ararat with me, or if I could not prevail so far with him, to accompany me to the south side of the mountain to the convent of Chor-wirab, (that is, the deep hole,*) or at least to the next monastery, erected about 1300 years ago by St. James, archbishop of Myzpinsk, quite at the foot of the mountain, on its western

---

* This hole was, in the reign of Tiridates, the place of capital punishment for malefactors, none of whom survived twenty-four hours in it; but the blessed martyr, St. Gregory, being thrown in by command of Tiridates, lived here unhurt fourteen years together, among serpents, scorpions, and other venomous animals.—*Author.*

side. It stands on the very spot where the righteous Noah, on descending from the top of Ararat, planted the first vine, and established a vineyard: hence it is called Eark-Uri, (the first-planted vineyard, or vine.) These two convents were formerly inhabited by monks, but are now quite deserted. The latter is remarkable for the following circumstance: St. James, the above-mentioned archbishop of Myzpinsk, determined, at least so we are told by the holy fathers, to ascend to the top of Ararat, to examine the spot where Noah's ark rested. He prayed most fervently, and set out on his expedition. When he could proceed no farther for weariness, he sought to recruit his strength by sleep, but he always found himself on awaking at the very same place from which he had started, or not far from it. He persevered, however, in the attempt for seven years, till at length an angel appeared to him in a vision, bringing him a piece of the uncorrupted wood of the ark, and telling him, that God would not wholly disregard his prayers and his fatigues; that he had therefore sent this piece of wood to gratify his curiosity; but that he could not obtain a sight of the ark itself till he should return to the bosom of his mother and be able to explore her bowels.

James found the wood given to him by the

angel in his vision* lying beside him when he awoke. To testify this event to future ages, St. James prayed to God to work some lasting miracle on this spot, and at his prayer a spring gushed forth, and is still to be seen about a werst above the convent. This spring has no outlet, and its waters possess this wonderful property. In the surrounding country there are black birds of small size, which follow the water of the spring, not in great number, nor at a great distance, whenever it is carried away, as I have myself seen, when some of it was brought to our town; and I can attest it as an established truth, that birds of this species are met with no where but in the environs of this spring. If corn-fields are infested by worms or attacked by locusts, the people immediately sprinkle them with this water. At the smell of the water those birds immediately come flocking together, God knows whence, like a thick black

* This piece of wood is now kept at the convent of Etschmiazyn; how long it has been there I cannot precisely say. It is of a grayish colour, as compact as bone, of an agreeable smell, but differing from every known species of wood: it bears marks of having been chopped and split with an ordinary axe, whereas, in our country, tools of a totally different kind are used for the purpose.—*Author.*

cloud, alight upon the field, devour the locusts or other pernicious insects, and thus preserve the corn. This water is carried to Georgia, and to all the contiguous provinces of the Turkish and Persian empire, and the Mahometans themselves have recourse to it in such cases: but it must not upon any account be set down on the floor or on the ground, but kept constantly suspended, otherwise it loses all its virtue. For my part I was ready to brave every danger to behold that place with mine eyes, but my brother was too grievously afraid of robbers; and indeed to travel in safety in our country, it is necessary to form caravans of ten, fifteen, or more persons. I was therefore necessitated to return with him to Wagarschapat, where I lived so secluded that I was numbered among the runaways.

After some time my teacher informed me, that the pepper-loving archimandrite, Karapet, had been appointed bishop and superior of the convent of Georgiewsk, and advised me to have recourse again, for the sake of security, to his protection. This advice I took with very great joy, for I was perfectly well acquainted with the careless character of my Karapet, and had a certain presentiment that I should live pretty comfortably with him: before sun-rise next morning I started for Aschtarak, and thence

proceeded to the convent, five wersts farther, at the foot of Mount Arakat, and went directly to Karapet. I began my address with all the humility I could assume; I assured him that I was deeply impressed with his former kindness to me, that I was sincerely devoted to him, and desirous of being readmitted into his service, in which he might depend upon the exertion of my best abilities. "And so," said he, "thou returnest to me like the prodigal son to his father!"—"Even so, father."—"Well then, kneel down and confess thy repentance." I now perceived that the bishop wished to dramatize the scripture parable, and to act the principal character himself; I therefore dropped on my knees and began:—"I have sinned before heaven and before thee, I am not worthy to be called thy son; but have compassion on me, and let me be admitted into the number of thy hired servants." He answered me in a tone expressive of perfect reconciliation and love, and said: "Arise, my son, I have found my lost talent." After this little ceremony I had to relate to him what had befallen me, but I took care not to let him know what I had suffered from the new director, and that, if I applied to him, it was not of my own free-will but on account of the difficulty of my situation, and because I had no hopes of living peaceably unless under his pro-

tection. I was nevertheless of real use to him, and enjoyed his confidence; kept the accounts of his receipts and disbursements, and was in other respects under no restraint, but could do what I pleased. I went frequently to Aschtarak, and though I had none of the fine clothes left that were given me by the late archbishop, Sagak, yet none had such as I even then wore; and from my not dressing better than I did, it was conjectured that I had plenty of money.

The Persians call this convent Mogni, probably from the ancient name of the place. Here are preserved the remains of the blessed martyr, St. George, which are deposited in the wall between the altar and the closet in which the sacred vestments are kept. It is frequented by Christians, and still more by Persians, who resort hither to pay homage to the sacred relics, and thus to obtain a cure for a disease which is met with in Persia alone, and is, as it were, endemial in that climate. This disease consists in an extraordinary inflammation of the face, accompanied by swelling, and large red tumours resembling those of proud flesh. The Persians on this occasion always bring with them offerings of various clean animals, which are slaughtered in the court-yard of the convent, and distributed among the poor. Every one who prays fervently and with faith, whether Christian or

Persian, is very speedily delivered from the above-mentioned disease. Such as come to pray over the sacred relics likewise make offerings of money, and the sums thence arising passed unchecked into my hands. I could set down what receipts I pleased, and hence I never gave the bishop the full amount, but made a handsome deduction, which I gave secretly to the poor, and especially to those who came from a small village belonging to the convent to solicit alms of the pilgrims: for my own necessities I provided, but with the utmost moderation, out of the remaining part, or personal income of the bishop.

Being, as I have already observed, quite my own master, I once went in company with a trusty person to see the ancient churches and convents, which are very numerous on Mount Arakat. Though now empty and deserted, most of them are still entire, some looking as if recently erected, and very few being in ruins. There is scarcely any thing in this part of the country but bespeaks the savage, predatory, and destructive disposition of the inhabitants. Indeed the tribes roving about here, such as the Lesgians, the Kurds, and others, as well as some of the Persians, who resemble them, have merely the shape of men, being wholly devoid of every humane feeling, and so brutal in their nature,

that they are scarcely a whit better in that respect than the most ferocious beasts—but some exceptions must be made, as, for instance, in favour of the Lesgians, on account of their hospitality. This is deemed by them so sacred a duty, that when a fugitive comes to one of them, and claims hospitality, even though he may have murdered the son or brother of the host, the latter is bound not only to defer his revenge, but also to protect him from other enemies during the time that he continues to be his guest.

I had heard a great deal of the ruins of the ancient city of Karpi, which is named after the river Karpi, and still more of its inhabitants, who are distinguished beyond all the tribes of this country by their strong propensity to pillage and knavery. I was naturally curious to see this place, which is about five or six wersts from the convent, and I was particularly desirous to behold with mine own eyes the church, which is said to be dyed with the blood of the inhabitants: for the Lesgians, or some other marauders, as it is related, once burned five hundred persons of both sexes on its roof. I actually found all the walls of this church, dedicated to the holy Gabriel, stained with blood. About two hundred years ago, namely, there was a general insurrection in this country. A

great number of the roving banditti came to Karpi; some of its inhabitants fled, others resolutely assembled on the roof of the said church; for it is customary with us to build the roofs of churches in such a manner, that in case of emergency they may serve for fortresses. The robbers, unable to dislodge them, at least without great loss to themselves, were nevertheless determined not to leave them behind. They therefore filled the interior of the church with dry wood, and collected a heap of the same all round it: the unfortunate people had no means of escape, and were all burned. The city had a small fortress; but both the ramparts and the houses are mostly in ruins—the above-mentioned church, and that of St. Peter and St. Paul, being the only exceptions. The fugitive Karpians now reside, dispersed in very small number, in various places, one of which scarcely contains more than three houses. They are in reality such consummate thieves and rogues, that, according to an ancient tradition still current among them, they once tricked the devil himself. The story is as follows:—The devil had acquired a right to their fields, on which they agreed with him, that when their crops were ripe, they should retain the upper part and the devil should have the lower: they sowed all their lands with wheat, and the devil of course

had nothing but the straw for his share. Next year the old gentleman, fully determined not to be again so bamboozled, stipulated that the upper part should belong to him and the lower to the Karpians: but then they sowed all their grounds with beet, turnips, and other esculent roots, and so the devil got nothing but the green tops for his portion.

Karapet strongly urged me to embrace the ecclesiastical profession. The first time he made this proposal, I answered, that it would be necessary for me previously to examine my powers, and duly to prepare myself, that I might not enter unworthily into holy orders. The second time I pleaded that I was not yet duly qualified, and Karapet was satisfied with this excuse: he at length fixed Ascension-day for the time of my ordination as a deacon, but I feigned illness and it was postponed. Soon afterwards I had well nigh got rid both of ordination and Karapet by a matrimonial alliance, owing to the following circumstances.

Many complaints had been preferred by young Armenians and Persians to the Chan of Erivan, that fathers would not give them their daughters in marriage, unless for a considerable sum, which they could not pay down immediately, according to the custom of that country. The demands of the fathers were so exorbitant, that

it was not in the power of the lovers and their relatives to comply with them. This cupidity, which was both prejudicial to the welfare of society, and tyrannical in regard to the young people, of course required a check: the Chan, therefore, adopted an expedient which did him honour, and gained him the thanks of both sexes. He caused it to be proclaimed in all the places in his government, that each of them should send him the finest of its unmarried females for his seraglio, with severe penalties in case of disobedience or concealment. This command, together with the report purposely circulated, that spies had been sent out with it, which, however, was not the fact, so alarmed all the fathers that they immediately began to look out for husbands for their daughters, to save them from being sacrificed to the lusts of the Chan. In our town of Wagarschapat two hundred couple were married in the space of twenty-four hours, without any other witnesses than the priests; and such too was the case in other places.

This fortunate turn of affairs had like to have had a powerful influence on me. An inhabitant of Aschtarak, a man possessing no great wealth, had a daughter who passed for the first beauty of that town. She too was asked without ceremony on this occasion whom she wished to have for a husband. Three

young men of the place were suitors for her hand. To confess the truth I was very fond of her too; I was frequently at the house of her parents, where I was not ill received; for, as well on account of my learning as because I was supposed to have money, the lowest rank was not assigned me among the young men, I was besides the secretary and favourite of the bishop. Though I was certainly not blind to the advantages which I possessed, still I had no thoughts of marrying. The fair lady, however, selected me, and besought her parents in a very moving manner to employ all the means in their power to secure me for her husband. The father immediately hastened to the priest of the place, to request him to undertake the arrangement of this affair. The latter sent me, by the husband of the elder sister, a letter with a formal proposal, and a statement of some of the advantages which he himself offered to assist me to attain. The priest, it seems, was the more ready to promote the match, as he was solicitous to attach me to his church, because I was thoroughly acquainted with the church service and regulations, in which he himself was not so well versed. To tell the truth, there was not a scholar in the whole country who was my equal in these points or in reading; go whither I

would, I was sure to be noticed for my talents, and thereby gained respect from some, from others envy, and from others blows. I received the priest's letter late in the evening, and rejoiced at the proposal made to me, especially as the business was to be accomplished with such rapidity. At the same time I was extremely desirous that my brother should be present at the nuptials, and therefore dispatched a swift-footed messenger, with an invitation to come to me as early as possible on the following day. For this service I paid seventy-two *paras*, or one hundred and twenty *copecks*, to the messenger, who had to go eighty wersts to and fro. The keys of the convent were under my care: there was consequently nothing to prevent me from leaving the convent late in the evening, and proceeding to Aschtarak, where I went straightway to the priest. Meanwhile my three rivals above mentioned, having learned the preference given by the lady to me, went to the head of the congregation there, and complained bitterly of the affront offered to them by me, a stranger, in taking the bride from them, and that too without the knowledge of the bishop, who had destined me for the clerical profession. The superior thereupon gave them permission to seek me, and if they should find me in the town, to thrash me

soundly, and bring me to him, and he would send me off to the bishop. These three suitors then went directly to the priest, and they missed very little of being there at the same time with me: but he, being already apprized of the complaint and design of the disappointed two, gained time sufficient to conceal me: and thus was I obliged to return the same night to my convent, and to continue single. The venerable superior, however, did not fail to call next day on Karapet, and to acquaint him with every thing. Karapet would not believe the story, and I found means almost to justify myself in spite of the testimony of the whole congregation. At length, indeed, Karapet began to give more credit to this testimony than to me: he accused me of deception, and reprimanded me most severely. Be this as it may, I am still sincerely thankful to God that I continued single and retained my liberty. Could I indeed but have become a priest!—the priests lead an enviable life among us, and are highly esteemed; whereas a man scarcely salutes a monk when he meets one, and frequently will not even take off his cap to a bishop.

What Karapet now intended to do to keep me about him I know not; but this I know,

that I should have had no means of getting away from him but by flight. But a new occurrence prevented both the one and the other, and compelled not me alone to betake myself to flight, but all the monks and inhabitants, so that nothing was left but the bare walls. The third day after the failure of my matrimonial speculation, an order was unexpectedly received from the Chan of Erivan, commanding the inhabitants of his government to collect their effects, and repair with them to the usual places of security; for intelligence had arrived that the Shah was marching against Erivan with a powerful army.

In compliance with this intimation I removed with the servants of the convent to Wagarschapat, where I remained; but Karapet repaired with the fraternity to Etschmiazyn, whither the inhabitants of Wagarschapat also conveyed their effects betimes. A place was there allotted to each family for its residence. In the whole district, namely, there are but two places of refuge from hostile incursions, the fortresses of Erivan and Etschmiazyn. I felt safer amidst the general danger, and had no fear of the approach of our foes, for my bitterest enemies were in my own town. Just at the time when fugitives were thronging from

all quarters to the fortress of the convent, there came from Zaregrad* and other still more remote places to Arserum, which is about six days' journey from Baiasit, one hundred and fifty Armenians, who were going to Etschmiazyn to perform their devotions, previously gave the patriarch notice of their intention. Luka, in reply, represented to them the danger they would infallibly incur from the Persians, and advised them to defer their design till a more favourable opportunity; but seventy of them were inflamed with such zeal, that they resolved to run all risks, even though it should cost them their lives. They proceeded to Etschmiazyn, where they satisfied the pious desires of their hearts, and sojourned three days in the convent: but meanwhile their return had become more dangerous and difficult, for straggling parties of the Persians had already reached Baiasit. The pilgrims then solicited the patriarch to give them an escort of fifty armed men from our town. My brother being selected for one, I resolved to go with him

* The word Zaregrad, the City of the Zars, when used in Russian, in such a manner that it cannot apply to Petersburg or Moskwa, which are also thus denominated, especially in the oratorical style, generally means Constantinople.—*Translator*.

as a volunteer, with the secret determination of quitting my country for ever. This intention I could not conceal from my mother, and therefore went to take leave of her. My chief hope to obtain her consent to my departure rested on the recapitulation of what I had already endured, and what I still suffered and might expect to suffer here at home. I urged, moreover, that should the Shah actually take Erivan, he would, according to custom, demand a number of prisoners from each town, and I should certainly be placed first on the list, as I had hitherto been on all unpleasant occasions: if, on the other hand, I now went away with professors of my own religion, I should withdraw myself in time from every imminent danger,—adding, that I never should forget all her maternal affection, and the education she had given me, but be as anxious to do all that lay in my power, even in a foreign land, for her benefit as for my own. All my arguments, however, were rejected, for my good mother could not bear the thought of parting from me. With her usual warmth of temper, she now strove to retain me by her malediction, but I had, if I may so express it, a desperate resolution. My situation operated upon me more powerfully than any persuasions, and away I went with the caravan of pilgrims.

Scarcely had we reached the wood of Elgon on the bank of the Arak, when we perceived at a distance a troop of about a hundred Persians riding towards us. They were commanded by the eldest son of the Sultan of Makin, near which the convent of St. Thaddæus, mentioned above, is situated. Escape was impossible; they soon overtook us, and as our pilgrims were Turkish subjects, they demanded five ducats per head, which were immediately paid them. Our caravan ought not to have submitted so tamely to the Persians; it should have fought, and would no doubt have conquered, but it durst not; for one of the Sultan's younger sons had married the Chan's own sister, and resided at Erivan. But no sooner had we reached the bank, and were seeking a ford, than the same troop again came upon us, renewed their demands, and were not to be dissuaded by any arguments from extorting ten more ducats from each individual, protesting at the same time with an oath, not only that they would give no farther molestation to the travellers, but escort them in safety to the place of their destination. My comrades had only engaged to accompany them to the banks of the Arak; and as they foresaw that the Persians would not leave them in peace, but

plunder them completely before they quitted them, they unanimously advised me not to rush into inevitable death, but rather return home along with them. My brother also earnestly entreated me not to break the heart of my mother, who would be constantly terrified by the idea of the dangers to which I should infallibly be exposed on the other bank. The truth of these representations was obvious, and thus did I suffer myself to be persuaded to return home. Two days afterwards we were actually informed by persons who came from Baiasit, that no sooner had our travellers crossed the river, than they were again beset by the Persians, stripped of every thing, and almost all massacred, for only ten of them escaped by flight.

For my part, I had scarcely made my appearance in the street before I was asked—how long I had been returned from my journey? how Constantinople looked? how people fared there? and the like questions; and some of our neighbours told me, that my mother was gone in despair to the house of Job,* to pray

* The family of Job is an ancient family; indeed, it may be asserted, that there is no other of such high antiquity in

upon the gospel to God for my speedy return. I hastened to the house, and actually found my mother praying on her knees before the gospel. At the first glance she took me for a spectre, but was soon convinced that it was really myself, and rejoiced most heartily. I went home with her, accompanied by the jeers of a number of idle people.

A week had scarcely passed when merchants from Tiflis came with goods from Tawris to our town: their caravan, including servants, amounted to fifty men, almost all Armenians. The inhabitants of Tiflis, like the Georgians in general, were then considered as a very brave and courageous people. My good teacher,

---

our town. The gospel(1) is written on parchment, by whom I know not, but thus much I know, that no person dares approach it but the priest in his pontifical attire. When Shah-Abbas threatened our country, the then head of the family hid this gospel, to prevent its falling into the hands of Mahometans, under the bridge of the rivulet of Salomonow, where it lay seven years in the water beneath a stone; and on his return he found it perfectly uninjured. More than once it was removed to the church of the convent, but it always went back of itself to its former place, till after many fruitless attempts, it became stationary in the house of the above-mentioned family.—*Author.*

(1) What the author here terms the gospel is probably the well-known book of the Old Testament.—*Translator.*

who neglected no opportunity of serving me, strongly advised me on this occasion not to let the caravan depart without me. One of the priests of our town had been at Tiflis, and was acquainted with a merchant belonging to the caravan. Jointly with my teacher he begged this merchant to take me with him to Russia, whither he intended to proceed with his companions. He undertook the charge, and plighted his word to fulfil it faithfully; on which my teacher gave him thirty rubles of mine which I had placed in his hands. At length, early in the morning of Sunday the 15th of July, 1795, the merchant informed me that he should set out at noon, and desired me to hold myself in readiness. I hurried home: luckily my mother was at my sister's, and my brother gone to the convent, so that I found my sister-in-law alone. I told her I was going a journey, and requested her to dress me some victuals to take with me: but she rudely replied, that I was not master of the house, that I had brought nothing in, and therefore had no right to take any thing out. Incensed at this treatment, I gave her a sound drubbing, by way of farewell, and helped myself to bread and cheese and three fowls, which I got a female neighbour to dress for me. Thus, in my twentieth year, did I quit

Wagarschapat for ever. Some of my former comrades begged me to take them with me, but I told them I was risking every thing, ignorant what would become of me, and whether life or death was to be my portion; they, on the other hand, had not such motives as I for exposing themselves to manifest dangers. I took leave of none but my teacher, who had the preceding evening given me much wholesome and impressive advice respecting my future conduct, concluding with the words of the Psalmist: "Turn thee away from evil, do good, seek peace, and thou shalt find it." This excellent man was, soon after my departure, ordained a priest, in which vocation he still continues to lead a life of exemplary piety.

The caravan took the route to Amaran, through Aschtarak. The merchant ordered one of his attendants to relieve me of my bundle, and lay it on a horse, so that I had then nothing to carry but my gun. When we were about three wersts from the town, I thanked God for my deliverance, making sure that, at this juncture, I should not be pursued beyond that distance. The caravan halted at the convent of St. George, where I had resided with Karapet. The inhabitants of Aschtarak had fled to their caves, in the inaccessible and perpendicular rocks border-

ing the river Karpi; or, to speak more correctly, in the sides of the abyss, through which that river runs, near Aschtarak. They have no other way of getting to these caverns than by being drawn up with ropes and pulleys, in the same manner as it is common to draw up stones and mortar in building lofty houses. Every twenty-four hours parties of ten men, or more, are alternately on the watch in the village, to observe all persons passing near it, and to give timely notice of the approach of an enemy. Among those who were just then on duty was a young man of Aschtarak, whom I had taught to read. He was of a good family, and by no means a simpleton. He came to the convent to us, to inquire what was going forward at Erivan and in our town; whether we brought any intelligence concerning the enemy, and the like. He was greatly rejoiced to meet with me, asked whither I was travelling, and promised next day to bring me a supply of provisions for the journey. I now considered myself as perfectly free, and had no idea of ever setting eyes again on any person from our place, when, on the following day, my brother and ten other men all at once made their appearance. They had undertaken, for a hundred rubles, to escort a merchant belonging to our caravan, who had staid behind, and they overtook us at the convent;

but my brother told me he had accompanied them for no other purpose than to take me back. I earnestly entreated him to leave me in peace, and neither to drag me back to sufferings from which I had fled, nor to denounce me to the caravan as a runaway; but he peremptorily insisted on my compliance with his desire. I had no other alternative than to wait for my Aschtarak friend, who actually came in about an hour with the promised provisions. I had made up my mind to speak with him alone, and found an opportunity to do so behind the convent, where I informed him that my brother was come to fetch me back, and solicited him, as the strongest proof of his friendship, to extricate me from this dilemma, and to protect me against my brother. My friend readily consented, hurried away to the town, and prevailed on thirty stout fellows to assist him: he then returned to me, and exhorted my brother to let me go in peace, and not expose me to disgrace, and replunge me into my former misery. I assured him, myself, that if I was going to a foreign country, it was not because I wished to withdraw myself from my mother and him; but with the firm resolution, in case I should prosper there, to share all my earnings with them, and to contribute to their comforts. It was impossible, however, to persuade my brother that I had taken my measures

so decidedly, he was not to be diverted from his purpose by any arguments. "Well, then," at length said my Aschtarak friend; "as thou wilt not listen to good advice, complain not afterwards if we have recourse to other means. Should thy brother set out with thee, he will not go far: ye are but ten, and thirty of us are ready to fall upon you and cut you in pieces, and set him at liberty to travel whithersoever he pleases."—My brother was now sensible of his folly, or rather that he was too weak to carry his design into execution: he, therefore, vented his anger in reproaches, saying, I had deceived him, persuaded him to marry, and promised to do the same, and now left him by himself. I strove to pacify him by all possible assurances of my affection and everlasting attachment—and thus we parted. I thanked my kind friend for the important service he had rendered me, and promised to evince my gratitude by deed on the first opportunity.

Our caravan stopped three days at the convent, for the purpose of gaining authentic information concerning the state of the road. On the fourth day we proceeded along the river Karpi, at the foot of the northern declivity of Mount Arakat, and halted for the night not far from the ancient convent of Kenaz-Paita, (the life-giving wood). It is also named Sagmos-a-Wank, or the Psalter-

convent, because the Psalter is read there day and night. This wood possessed such miraculous power, that when it was carried out into a field, all the serpents which happened to be in it betook themselves to flight and became blind: at present, indeed, there are serpents in the environs, but they are innoxious.

Next morning we reached the district of Amaran, which signifies summer-place. It stretches out into a large, wide, almost perfectly level valley, every where clothed with very beautiful herbage, and containing numerous springs. Here an extremely agreeable atmosphere refreshes the traveller, recruits his exhausted strength, and communicates a feeling of uncommon buoyancy. We here perceived at a distance a body of about a hundred armed men, who divided into two parties, probably with a view to attack us on two sides at once: we therefore halted, took off our saddles, and piled them up into a kind of battery, in the centre of which we collected our horses, and began to fire away. The banditti, deterred by our resolute attitude, sheered off; but we were under the necessity of stopping there till the following day, and reconnoitring the whole adjacent country, lest we should fall in with other such parties, who might lie in ambush for us in some suitable situation. We proceeded next morning, but with the like pre-

caution. Before evening we discovered on our right, in a low plain, a pretty large encampment, round which many camels, oxen and horses, and some sheep, were grazing, whence we concluded, that it belonged to the people of some town who had fled hither to avoid the dangers of war. We halted for the purpose of passing the night there, and sent some men to the camp to procure provisions: from them we learned that they were inhabitants of Garadag, in the province of Nachitschewan, who were removing for security to Schurakal, a fortified place in the Turkish territory. Some of them were Armenians, but the majority Persians. Our messengers brought back some sour milk, bread, and cheese. Meanwhile some persons came from the contrary side to our caravan, and spoke Grusian (or Georgian) with the merchants. Though I was a stranger to their language, yet I frequently heard them repeat the word *dschuschut*, which signifies spy; and from the gesticulations of our merchants, I concluded that they were giving these spies information concerning the people of Nachitschewan; and as I likewise heard the name of their leader, I conjectured that, it being war time, he was inquiring about those who were not Grusian subjects, with a view to attack and plunder them, and that this fate awaited the poor creatures who had so

kindly supplied us with food: I therefore resolved to apprize them, in some way or other, of their danger. In our caravan there was another traveller besides me, a young man from the village of Plur, with whom I formed an acquaintance by the way. I communicated to him what I had remarked, and found him not less ready to exert himself for the rescue of the innocent people: I therefore told him in what manner I thought he might repair most secretly to the camp, and acquaint the travellers with the impending danger. He most cheerfully undertook this commission, and executed it immediately. The above-mentioned chieftain was posted with five hundred men at Pambakazora, two days' journey from our station, and thus the people of Nachitschewan, on learning their danger, would have time to escape, by retiring to Erivan, the nearest fortified place. On the two succeeding days we proceeded without farther impediment to Pambakazora, and were there informed that the chief had started to seize his prey; but on receiving intelligence that the travellers had withdrawn to Erivan, he had not ventured to pursue them, and was then on his return. Unfortunately he found us still at Pambakazora; and the failure of his attempt cost the young man of Plur his life, for the chief imme-

diately suspected our caravan. Our merchants and their attendants could not have betrayed him, for they were themselves Grusinian subjects; I had not quitted for a moment the man to whose charge I was committed, and thus every thing concurred to criminate the poor fellow from Plur. The chief desired no further explanation, but instantly commanded his people to dispatch him: they accordingly fell upon him with whatever they could lay their hands on, while I, overwhelmed with the fear of death, commended my soul to God, for what had I to expect but the same fate, if my unfortunate acquaintance had impeached me as the contriver of the plan, for the execution of which he was about to lose his life? He had, however, generously determined to endure alone torments and even death itself, and therefore uttered not a word to implicate me. They broke his arms, legs, and all his limbs, and cut off his head. My heart was penetrated with grief; my conscience accused me as the chief cause of the cruel death of the unfortunate young man. My only consolation arose from our joint good intention, and from having saved so many innocent victims, who would otherwise have fallen into the hands of these banditti; that our plan would have been productive of such ruinous consequences, from

which I was preserved by nothing but his extreme fortitude, it was utterly impossible for me to foresee.

The chief alleged, that the reason of his intended attack on the people of Garadag was, because they had not sought an asylum in Grusia, but intended to go to Turkey. They had, however, chosen the better part; for on leaving Pambakazora, and entering the *steppe*, the most dreary prospects met our view for two successive days. No sooner were the inhabitants of the provinces of Karabag, Erivan, Nachitschewan, and other parts, as well Mahometans as Christians, apprized that the Shah, their sovereign, threatened to attack Erivan, than, to escape the destruction which is the almost inevitable consequence of the outrages incident to the passage of troops, they fled, with their herds, flocks, and all their effects, to the frontiers of Grusia, hoping there to find a place of safety, and assured that the Shah would not easily conquer, and therefore probably not attack, the kingdom of Georgia or Grusia. Scarcely had they reached the *steppe* of Grusia, when they began to experience a more severe want of corn than they could have conceived: by purchasing it at a very exorbitant price they soon spent all their money, and were then obliged to give the Grusians a sheep for three pounds of corn,

and a horse for a *lider*, or ten pounds; and in this way they were at length necessitated to part with every article of their wearing apparel. What the Grusians could not extort in this manner they took by force; and some were stripped completely naked, so that they had not even a shirt left to their back. Reduced by this wretchedness to despair many gave themselves up as slaves to opulent Grusians, to avoid at least perishing with famine. Others died of hunger and cold, and their bodies were left unburied, for these wretched fugitives had not even a shovel wherewith to consign the remains of their fellow-sufferers to the earth; and hence, for two days together, we found the atmosphere so infected that we could scarcely endure it. From all these circumstances, it is extremely probable that the Grusians, from the first, took these unfortunate wretches under their protection, and treated them afterwards as they did, merely that they might not only strip them of all they had, but, when they had reduced them to the last extremity, make a property of themselves also—in which plan they were but too successful. After witnessing this melancholy spectacle, we came, the day after our departure from Pambakazora, to within a few wersts of the place where, on the following morning, we had to descend from the mountain into an extensive and thick wood. This wood

was not safe, and we therefore started at a very early hour in the morning. We, moreover, received intelligence, that another small commercial caravan had, only a few hours before, been attacked and plundered. With a view to deter the banditti, we strove to give them a notion that we were more numerous than we really were: accordingly we shouted and sang various tunes and in various languages, fired guns and pistols, and made as much noise as possible with our laden horses. Thus did we proceed in no small anxiety for four hours along a very narrow road, without coming to the smallest valley, in which to draw up and extend ourselves for our defence, in case of emergency. At length we reached a little river, which we crossed by a bridge, and again had to ascend a hill. Here, indeed, the timber trees were not so thick, but there was plenty of underwood, so that we could not consider ourselves out of danger till, about three wersts farther, we entered a plain, where we halted and fed our horses: but here we had to encounter another enemy, namely, large flies, the bite of which was so severe as to draw blood immediately. We had it indeed in our power to cover ourselves from their attacks; but our horses were so annoyed by them that they were prevented from enjoying the excellent pasturage. All we could do, therefore,

was to saddle them, and pursue our journey. At the distance of about five wersts we came to a better place, abounding in good pasturage and water, of which there is no deficiency in this whole country. Here we passed the night, and next morning crossed the river Nachetur with such difficulty, owing to our ignorance of its localities, that we were afterwards obliged to dry all our goods, which occupied us the remainder of the day. On the ensuing day we reached the considerable town of Koda, whence the servants were sent with the goods across the *steppe* of Soganlug, while I and the merchants of the caravan took the shorter road over the mountains, and arrived in the evening of the same day at Tiflis.

My host, guardian, or whatever I may call him, took me with him to his house. Fatigued as I was with the journey, and dispirited with the dangers to which I had been exposed, I was anxious to gratify my curiosity. It was scarcely day-light before I went out to see the town, and both in going and returning I dreamt only of the success which I hoped to meet with at Tiflis, and afterwards to follow up in Russia, according to circumstances, when I should have arrived there. The enchanting appearance of the town and its inhabitants, and the opulence every where apparent, were sufficient induce-

ments for forming such plans; but my day-dreams lasted only a very few hours.

Just about this time Raim Chan, nephew of the Chan of Handshu Dshawat, applied to Heraklios, Zar of Grusia, for assistance against his uncle, who, on the death of his father, had usurped his territories. For this purpose volunteers were raised, and to each of them were given thirty rubles, and three pieces of stuff for upper garments. The number of these volunteers already amounted to about four hundred, who were stationed at Seidobat, near the city gardens of Tiflis. These volunteers had no occupation: till therefore a greater number of them should be collected, they had nothing to do but to get drunk, enjoy themselves, and play all sorts of foolish tricks. They had with them some pieces of cannon. The gentry of Tiflis are by no means backward at sounding their own praises; thus too, these people unanimously declared that they were sure of subduing not Handshu only but all Persia. My host would probably have been glad to keep the thirty rubles which he had received for the purpose of forwarding me to Russia, without giving himself any farther trouble on my account; he, therefore, and some others, endeavoured to persuade me to join the ranks of the brave fellows who were going to conquer Handshu and Persia:

but I renounced the proffered honour of being a conqueror, and was not at all covetous of the booty which they were already dividing in imagination among themselves. Meanwhile our caravan had not yet arrived. My host sent me the following morning to meet the *keregdars*, (that is, the carriers, who transport the goods of the merchants with their horses,) to tell them not to enter the city till midnight to evade paying the toll. To do this I had to go along the bank of the river by the Seidobat road, past Kerzanis. I was in the Persian dress. The above-mentioned volunteers were all intoxicated; they detained me and asked in Persian who I was. I replied that I was from Erivan; on which they immediately concluded that I was a Persian spy, and, without farther inquiry, dragged me towards a cannon. At first I thought they were joking; but they tied me in good earnest to the gun, and began to beat the soles of my feet, at the same time admonishing me to tell the truth. I solemnly protested that I had already done so, as they would find, if they would send and inquire: but they paid no regard to all I could say. Fortunately for me, the *Catholikos* of Grusia had here a garden which adjoined to that of my host. The gardener of the *Catholikos*, seeing the circle collected around me, and hearing my cries, came out of curiosity to learn what was

the matter. He had seen me the preceding evening with my host; as a servant of one of the principal persons, he had himself some weight, and cried out to the soldiers: "What are you at, you stupid drunkards? Why would you kill the poor fellow?"—They shouted to him that I was a spy, and would not listen to him; but he took me from them by force. The soles of my feet were completely flayed, so that I could not bear to set them to the ground.

The Zar Herakhos had promised the Raum Chan assistance against his uncle, and was probably well paid for it, which was but just. He himself applied for aid to the Zar of Imeret, on the nearer approach to Tiflis of the Persian Shah, Aga Mohamed, who had already reached Schuscha. When the Imeretian troops approached the city, the inhabitants prepared to receive them with great ceremony. My host's family asked me if I would not go along with them to witness their reception: being by this time sufficiently recovered, I went out at the Tapitag gate, and ascended a tolerably high hill, where I sat down to enjoy the sight at my ease. I soon perceived the deception intended to be practised by the leader of these troops, who had distributed his men in small parties all over the plain, to give them the appearance of being much more numerous than they really were;

for they amounted to scarcely two thousand. The Zar received them with great joy and much ceremony, and with salutes of small arms and artillery. These troops also were quartered at Kerzanis. In this country it is not customary to have corn and other necessaries of life in readiness for such auxiliaries; their subsistence therefore is supplied by the inhabitants, each house being obliged to furnish a certain quantity of bread, wine, and other articles. I cannot suppose, however, that this burden bore very heavily on the people; for, owing to the immense booty carried thither, necessaries of all sorts were lower in price, according to the testimony of the inhabitants, than had ever been known. The Imeretians, as well as the volunteers from Tiflis, were so profusely supplied with wine, that they might have bathed themselves in it if they had pleased; and the people of the town made this sacrifice with the greater cheerfulness, as they confidently anticipated the victory through their aid; for they considered them as capital soldiers, and estimated their number at eight thousand. With this assurance they were frequently heard to exclaim: "Now let Aga Mohamed come as soon as he will—who can resist us?"—For my part, I regarded these effusions of excessive confidence as the effect of a heated imagination; I had a presentiment that

they would be defeated, and Tiflis taken, and therefore determined to provide betimes for my safety, and to await neither the arrival of the Shah nor his predicted discomfiture. I wished for a companion, and thought I had found one in an inhabitant of the village of Norka, with whom I had become acquainted at Tiflis. I communicated to him my proposal and my apprehensions, telling him that I was firmly resolved to set off without delay. "The Persians indeed attack like lions," replied this singular fellow: "but they exert their whole strength in the first blow, and if this fails, they return home. The city as thou seest is strong, and its inhabitants are heroes; besides, all the Zarewitsches of Grusia will send more than ten thousand auxiliaries from their different provinces. Relying on this support, the Chan of Erivan has declared against the Shah, and there is not the least doubt that we shall annihilate the Persian army, and divide the spoil among us. Then every thing will be much cheaper in the city than it is even at present: I have witnessed many such events, and speak from experience; but thou art still young—what canst thou know about the matter?"

Without making any attempt to shake this his firm conviction, I adhered stedfastly to my purpose. I knew that my host had to transport the

merchandize which he had brought from Tauris to Dagistan, an extensive province in the mountains of Caucasus, inhabited by the Lesgians, where he intended to dispose of it at Balakan, the first frontier town towards Grusia, and to purchase silk, with which he meant to proceed through the city of Andreiew to Kislar, and thence to Astrachan; so that I had the most confident expectation of thus reaching Russia, whither he had undertaken to conduct me. No sooner did intelligence arrive that the Shah had already passed Schuscha and reached Handshu, and that he was destroying every thing that opposed him by the way with fire and sword, than my host took leave of his family, and set out with me. It was in the last days of August that we departed, as we had entered, at midnight, and for the same reason—that is, to evade the payment of the tolls. We came before it was light to the village of Lilo, where the Grusians had many years before formed a settlement of Osetians, brought by them from the mountains. The removal of these people and their conversion to Christianity being effected by force, they are of course but very indifferent Christians. Mistaking us for robbers, they called out to us not to approach nearer; and as we did not at first hear them, they began to fire upon us, and actually shot one of our horses.

We, on our part, shouted to them with all our might that we had come from Tiflis, and were travelling with our merchandize to Signach, desiring them to cease firing, and calling God to witness that we spoke the truth. This imprecation so far influenced them that they suspended hostilities, but forbade us to stir from the spot before day-light.

We were three days in travelling from Lilo to Signach, in which space we met with no other human habitations than the then deserted village of Martgop, the inhabitants of which had just quitted it on account of robbers. These parts are extremely dangerous, and thus we could not stir a step without apprehension. If we perceived a hill or a clump of trees at a distance, we approached them with fear and trembling, under the idea that Lesgians or other banditti might be lying in wait behind them. We arrived nevertheless without molestation at Signach. This frontier town towards Dagistan is situated on a hill, has many orchards, and a still greater number of vineyards, that produce fine grapes, from which excellent wine is made. It contains also a spacious Grusian convent, dedicated to the celebrated female martyr, Nona, a market-place, and a fort.

Not long before my arrival at Signach, the superior of the convent there had been cut in

pieces by the Lesgians, through the treachery of the Grusians. The people here never go out to work in the fields but in parties and well armed. The superior once went to some lands, lying fifteen wersts from the convent, on the river Alasan or Ganach, with twenty labourers, whom he bound by a solemn oath not to run away in case of an attack from banditti, but to fight to the very last man. No sooner, however, did these dastardly fellows espy a party of Lesgians advancing towards them, than, regardless of their oath and their bishop, they betook themselves to flight. The latter, undaunted by the cowardice of his people, fired on the assailants, and killed four of their number before they came up close to him, after which he defended himself with his sabre till he was cut down. The Lesgians, when they were apprized of his dignity, exceedingly regretted what they had done; for, had they but taken him alive, what a ransom they might have obtained for him!

The eldest Zarewitsch, and heir-apparent to Heraklios, then resided as governor at Signach. Heraklios, when he perceived the danger on the part of Mahomet-Chan approaching, more than once dispatched his commands, as well as urgent entreaties, to him and to the other Zarewitsches, to send some thousands of troops without delay to his assistance. The Zarewitsch of Signach

had assembled the reinforcement required by his father, and himself accompanied the troops out of the city; but his people were so obstinate, that they struck into by-roads and returned home; for they gave themselves no concern about the defence of their country, but only about getting in their crops in due time, making their wine, and thus providing for their own subsistence and that of their families. The like disobedience they manifested when I was at Signach, and when the Shah was already before Tiflis.

My conductor waited at Signach for the arrival of a Lesgian of distinction, that, under his protection and guarantee, he might proceed with his merchandize to Dagistan: for this is the course always pursued in such cases. I had therefore abundant time to observe how matters were conducted in the Armenian church there. On the 8th of September, the anniversary of the birth of the blessed mother of God, I went thither at the time of morning service, to see whether the priests of this place conformed to the ecclesiastical rules and ordinances, and was extremely astonished to find that they merely performed the ordinary daily service. Indeed, most of the Armenians of this place know nothing of the Armenian language, and speak the Grusian only: but, after accosting first one and

then another, I at last met with a few who understood Armenian. I told them what festival it was, and asked why their priests did not perform the service prescribed for this day by our ritual. After whispering to one another, they asked for a calendar, and found that I was right. They then reproached their priests with their ignorance of their duty, and compelled them to begin again. It is needless to remark that this circumstance gave them a very favourable opinion of me. An Armenian doctor, named Matheos, who had been induced to remove hither from the Turkish territories, and was highly respected by the inhabitants of Signach, chanced to be at church on this occasion. He came up to me and kindly asked who I was, how long I had been there, and with whom I had come. He then insisted that my conductor and myself should go home with him, and promised to serve me as far as lay in his power. This doctor was a man of real merit, of great experience, and rich. He was just then building in the fortress of Signach, at his own expense, a church dedicated to the great hero and martyr, St. George. As soon as the service was over I went to his house. He spoke to my conductor, and begged him to leave me with him, promising to give him in my stead one of his own people, who was well acquainted with the

country, and was therefore likely to be much more useful to him than I could. He farther declared that he would give me his daughter, then ten years old, in marriage, with a portion of two thousand silver rubles, adopt me as his son, and when the church in the fortress should be finished, obtain for me priest's orders, and appoint me to officiate there. To this end he proposed, on the return of the merchant to Signach, to travel with him to Tiflis, to solicit the Zar Heraklios and the bishop to subscribe my adoption, so as to make me the representative of his family, and after his decease the father and guardian of his infant son. Such unexpected good fortune almost turned my brain, and with feelings which cannot be adequately expressed, I assured my benefactor of my gratitude, promising to exert myself to the utmost to deserve his favour, or at least to justify it by my conduct. I established myself without farther ceremony in his house; and my former host, having found a trusty guide, set out the next morning with the man furnished him in my stead. The doctor declared me master of his house, and invested me with the superintendence over all his affairs. He supplied the Zarewitsch from his table, and the very next day I had to accompany the servants who carried the victuals, lest they should play tricks by the way.

On the following day we carried him a large bowl of soup with choice mutton, dressed with bitter roots and hashed meat, together with other dishes, requisite to furnish an excellent table in the Asiatic style. On this occasion I saw the Zarewitsch for the first time. He was seated on a carpet spread on the floor, but was remarkable for nothing but his excessive corpulence, in which respect I never met with any person who could be at all compared with him. He was furnished with at least an equal supply for supper; but he complained that he had not enough sent him, and desired me to be sure and tell the doctor what he said. His board must, nevertheless, have cost annually no inconsiderable sum.

The Zarewitsch resided on a high hill in the house of the *mauraw*, or viceroy to the Zar, who was then absent. His retinue consisted of four or five men, three mules, and a horse. The next day he was satisfied with the repast, and, therefore, in a very good humour. He inquired who I was and whence I came; I answered his questions, on which he asked whether I knew Luka, the Catholicos — "I know him, Zarewitsch."—"What a silly fellow he is!"—"And for what reason are you pleased to style him so?"—"He has given the Shah 100,000 rubles. (The patriarch had actually

paid the Shah this sum at his requisition; but on condition that the Shah should protect him from all hostile attacks.) Had he given it to us we should have protected him much more effectually." In the same manner as the Shah considered the Grusians as enemies of the patriarch, so the Grusians regarded the Shah as his foe. Upon this I ventured to ask the Zarewitsch, with great simplicity, "Of what religion are the Persians?"—"Don't you know?—they are Mahometans."—"And you, Zarewitsch, what religion do you profess?"—"Thou art a man grown," replied he angrily, "and yet so ignorant! We belong to the Greek church."—"Well," said I, "the Persians, who are Mahometans, have demanded money from us, and you, who are Christians, require the same; what difference then is there between you and them?"

It was owing to mere thoughtlessness that, wholly unmindful of the instructions of my teacher, I put this question solely with the view of giving the Zarewitsch a proof of my penetration, in hopes that he would commend and respect me for it, and never supposing that he would take it in a totally different sense. He was silent for a moment, and seemed not to have understood me: he then commanded his people to take me away, to give me a sharp

lecture, and throw me into the hole. Three of his people seized me by the hair, and struck me unmercifully, sometimes with sticks, at others with their fists, and shut me up, convincing me, in a very painful manner, of the justice of my good preceptor's maxim: "Think before you speak."

As soon as the doctor was informed of what had befallen me, he went to the Zarewitsch to solicit my liberation. He could not well refuse his request, otherwise the doctor might have cut off his supplies: and so I was carried home, where my kind patron employed the most efficacious means of his art to heal and to invigorate my wounded body. It was on the 11th of September that this circumstance occurred. In the evening of the same day news reached Signach, that the Grusians had engaged and defeated the troops of the Shah, whose commander, Medshlum, a *melik* of the Armenians of Karabach, was killed on the spot. This *melik* had gone over to the Shah, and offered him his services against the Zar Heraklios, to revenge the death of his brother, who, enticed by the false promises of the Grusians, was proceeding to place himself under their protection, when they suffered him to be murdered in their *steppe* with all the others. On the 12th great rejoicings took place on

account of the victory: the Zarewitsch and all the people assembled in a meadow, where four pieces of cannon were drawn up and fired; they drank a great quantity of new wine, shouted for joy, and were loud in their execrations of the Shah. Weak as I still was, I could not help mustering all my strength in order to witness these rejoicings; but this time I recollected the advice of my preceptor, or rather perhaps the lesson so recently given me by the Zarewitsch: in short I was quite upon my guard and exceedingly reserved. This festival, thought I to myself, is an empty thing!—but I took care not to betray my sentiments by my looks. The 13th also was spent in rejoicing; but on the 14th fugitives from Tiflis arrived at Signach. Some of them were severely wounded; and they brought intelligence that, on the 12th, the day on which the victory was celebrated at Signach, the Shah had taken Tiflis, that many had perished, but the greater number had fled; that the Zar had secreted himself God knew where; and that the Shah was advancing towards Signach." This news naturally produced the greatest consternation, and at the same time it became so dangerous to stir out, that a person could scarcely venture a few steps from his own door alone; for instead of concerting the best mea-

sures for saving the town, some began to rob, plunder, and murder, as unfortunately is almost always the case there on such occasions. The Zarewitsch was so overwhelmed after his rejoicings with the unexpected tidings of this disaster, that he adopted what appeared to him the best expedient for his own safety, and would have run away.

The mules were already laden with his *erhtanks*, (coffers); but the people as soon as they saw this, assembled in great numbers about the house; they shouted to him that they should not allow him to depart, crying that he could consume their oxen and their sheep, and now, on the appearance of danger, he was going to desert them. "No!" said they with one voice; "no; we will not let thee go; thou shalt die with us—if we must perish so shalt thou *too*!" The Zarewitsch began to entreat and implore them to permit him to depart, but in vain; nay, they even placed a guard before the house to prevent his escape. His only resource was to bribe the latter, which he did with the sacrifice of all he possessed, and in a single *caftan* he fled to Telaph in Kachetia.

Some days afterwards my merchant returned with the intelligence that the Lesgians, on receiving information of the capture of Tiflis, had strengthened all their points of defence

for fear of the Shah. He had come back to Signach against his will: for he had intended to return by way of Telaph, in order to save the thirty rubles which he would now have to restore to me, but had been plundered on the way thither by the Grusians. At my request the doctor gave him a lodging in his house. About this time the doctor recommended me to the inhabitants of Signach, as a person capable of questioning a Persian spy whom they had taken, and translating his answers. In this supposed spy, however, I discovered a native of Erivan, the son of a smith, whom I had frequently seen at church, while I was with Karapet in the convent of St. George. He had wandered from place to place, and at length, pursuing his route with the intention of quitting Grusia, was seized at Signach, soundly beaten and wounded. I was so affected at the sight of him that I fell with tears about his neck. With a view to secure him from farther ill-usage, I pretended that he was the son of an Erivan prince, whom I knew to be a man of very good character, and who had come to Signach merely to escape the Persians. I importuned my doctor till he admitted him into his house, and rendered him all possible assistance; and to convince the people of Signach of the truth of my story, I treated

him with a respect that had almost the appearance of servility. The doctor hereupon took it into his head, to make inquiries of the stranger concerning my birth and family, and how I had lived in my own country; at the same time making no secret of what he intended to do for me. This my Erivan acquaintance had already heard from me; he probably envied me my good-fortune, and now repaid my kindness to him by telling the doctor, though he was really ignorant of my condition, that I was the son of a common boor; that in my youth I had played many scurvy tricks, and at length run away, adding he was sincerely sorry that he had thrown away his great bounty on so unworthy a subject, and that I should certainly make his daughter completely miserable. The doctor saw through the motive of this kind recommendation, and perceived that his informant was a most malicious and ungrateful fellow. He then questioned me concerning the real condition of the latter; and as I persisted in my former statement, he charged me with telling him a falsehood, and repeated to me all that the stranger had said. "For my part," continued he, "now I have once taken an affection for thee, and acknowledged thee as my son, I care not what thy birth may be: but this man, if he

really were of such high birth, would be too grateful for what thou hast done for him to slander thee, and to strive, merely out of envy, to divert me from what I mean to do for thee." He thereupon urged me once more to tell the truth concerning this man: but I should have been ashamed to give, out of revenge, a different account from what I had before voluntarily done, and repeatedly declared that the Erivaner was really the son of a *knæs*, and myself, as I before said, the son of a villager, in low circumstances, but not a common boor. My doctor, nevertheless, strongly doubted the noble origin of the Erivaner, and divined my reason for persisting in my first story: nay, it was only out of compassion that he forebore to drive him out of his house, as in that case he would infallibly have been put to death. But my other guest, the merchant, did me a far greater injury. He hastened his return to Tiflis, to learn the fate of his family which he had left behind there, took leave of our host when I was from home, and departed. He had nothing but the horse on which he rode, and another sorry beast laden with about eighty *pud* of Signach filberts, which was led by his man. Meeting him on my return home, I demanded of him my thirty dollars, threatening to detain him unless he paid me. This he had

no notion of doing, and therefore began talking to me concerning my situation, assuring me that I was feeding myself with false hopes, and acting very foolishly if I staid with Matheos, for he was now acquainted with all my faults, and had relinquished his intention of adopting me for his son and giving me his daughter; that, on the other hand, he meant to favour me with one of his maid-servants: and that instead of appointing me priest to his church, the utmost he would do would be to make me sacristan. With these words he pursued his way with his fellow-travellers, who were six in number. I had no time for reflection; and entertaining not the least doubt of the merchant's sincerity, I told him, if that were the case I would not stay another hour with Matheos, begging that he would wait for me till I had bidden adieu to the doctor. On my arrival at the house of Matheos, I told him, without any allusion to what I had heard, that I must leave him, and thanked him for all the kindness and affection he had manifested for me. The doctor and his wife were thunderstruck at this sudden change, and begged me, almost with tears, to acquaint them with the reason of my abrupt and unexpected departure; representing how dearly they loved me, and how all their hopes of the prosperity of

their family and all their happiness centered in me. I was afraid of entering into any explanation, lest I should lose time and my merchant, as it would have been impossible for me to get away from Signach alone. Regarding their words as mere flattery, I replied, that I would acquaint them fully by letter with the motives of my conduct. "Well," at last said the doctor to me, "well, my friend; thou wilt certainly repent turning thy back on us and on thy temporal prosperity."—"It may be, Mr. Matheos," rejoined I, "that you will have more to repent of on my account,"—and with these words I departed. The merchant had already started again with his companions, and I might have found it difficult to overtake him, but for his wretched horse, which, with the load of filberts could scarcely drag his legs after him. He received me in not the kindest manner, and directed me to keep with his servant. I was afraid lest they might hasten forward and leave me behind with the man, but the weakness of the horse obliged them to halt very frequently. The merchant, who bore me a grudge because I had demanded my money, struck me and his innocent attendant unmercifully with his sabre, because the horse could not keep pace with him. This happened at least ten times before we came to a rather

lofty hill, from which we descried some men on horseback. Owing to the circumstances of the times we could not suppose them to be any other than robbers. Our fellow-travellers hastily concealed themselves in a dell, while I and the servant, who were not above sixty fathoms from the strangers, were glad that the horse, from weakness, could not quit the spot. We hoped that the robbers would perceive us and deliver us from our tyrants.

I had just reason to expect a change for the better, for I hoped to be sold into good hands, and at the same time to be revenged on the obdurate merchant: but unluckily the robbers did not observe us, and our master forced us to follow him. His companions and himself had on the other hand seen through our design, and they beat us for it so unmercifully, that nothing but the fear of being killed outright kept our legs in motion. We passed the night at the village of Marthop, the inhabitants of which, as I have already observed, had all fled, and on the following day reached Lilo, where we found not a single living creature, but only a few dead bodies, for the Persians had advanced as far as this place. The nearer we approached to Tiflis the more numerous were the carcases on each side of the road. In the evening of the third day we arrived at

the suburb of Alwabar, which had been completely burned down by the Persians. We intended to cross the river Kur directly to Tiflis, but the Persians had in their retreat burned the bridge with a view to cover their rear. We were thus constrained to seek a place wherein to pass the night, but found in the whole village only a single house that had not been consumed by the flames. As soon as it grew dark, there came Kachetians prowling about to see what they could pick up among the ruins of the destroyed houses, and they disturbed our quarters so that our merchants were obliged to keep themselves the whole night on the defensive. Taking post at the doors and windows, they saluted the uninvited guests from time to time with the fire of their guns; but the Kachetians did not retire till day-break. Whether any of them had been killed or not it was impossible to ascertain, as dead bodies lay about on all sides. In our anxiety to find a shelter, we had not observed the preceding evening that Tiflis was on fire: but in the morning we perceived a thick smoke rising from almost every quarter of the city. As we found it impracticable to cross the Kur, we resolved to proceed at hazard to the river Arak, through the village of Koki, situated on its bank, exactly opposite to Tiflis;

but we were necessitated to halt at the village of Gawtschal, as our horses had had nothing to eat since we left Lilo. Next day, not far from the influx of the Arak into the Kur, a party of Kachetians fell upon me and the servant, and took from us every thing, excepting the filberts with which our horse was laden; that is to say, a couple of sorry pillows, a copper pot, a Persian carpet, and some other trifling articles, and among the rest my clothes. They would also have taken with them our old horse, but after dragging him forward a few paces they were glad to let him go again. While the Kachetians were plundering us in this manner, the merchants, who were at the distance of about sixty fathoms, called out to us, though we had no arms and were quite exhausted with hunger, to defend ourselves, and not suffer the banditti to pillage us so quietly: while they durst not themselves venture to approach, though they had guns, pistols, sabres, and powder, with all which the Kachetians were probably not provided. No sooner, however, had the latter retired, than they rode up to us, and beat us for not resisting the marauders, to such a degree, that we had not a sound place left on our whole bodies. In this state they left us lying, while they crossed the Arak to Zeheta, the principal convent in Grusia.

During the five days that we were travelling hither from Signach, I had eaten nothing but filberts, for I had quitted that place so precipitately that I had not even supplied myself with bread. Sore with beating, and debilitated with hunger, we had not strength to rise from the spot, and remained lying there till the following day. The merchant, the master of my companion and my debtor, had been so cruel as not even to leave us a few nuts, though he knew that we should not find on this spot so much as a root of any kind to eat. In the morning we crawled along the shore, but could no where find a place that was fordable; and were thus obliged to sit down under pain and hunger, and to wait in expectation of seeing some fugitive or other. About noon a Grusian came up to us: we requested him to show us a shallow place where we might cross; he demanded money, but as we had none he contented himself with a wretched girdle which I gave him, and the old worn-out shoes offered to him by my companion. We entered the river, each holding by one of his arms, and when the water threatened to cover our heads we sprung up, according to his directions, with our bodies rather inclined forward, and with the help of God we got safely across. The houses of Żcheta were likewise burned down, and a great number of dead

bodies were every where scattered about: the monks had all fled. In the court-yard of the convent we met with three servants, who had returned to seek something to eat. After searching every place, we could find nothing but an old hog, which ran from one corner of the court-yard to another. None of us had any implement fit for killing it. At length we found, in the court, a piece of a broken sickle, but we were all five so weak that it was not without great difficulty we managed to kill the emaciated animal. The next thing to be done was to go to the bank of the river in quest of wood, but none of us would venture out for fear of banditti; we therefore looked about for dry dung to cook our meat. We could but scorch it a little on the outside, while within it was quite raw, and we were destitute of salt: hunger, however, has no choice, and we satisfied its cravings in some degree. We passed the night in the yet-unfinished house of the *Katholikos*. The superior of the convent and the monks had deposited its treasures in a secret place within the wall, the aperture to which was on the top of the latter, and covered with the same stone of which the wall was built: but those who had concealed them had, in their hurry, or from want of thought, left the ladder standing at the place; and hence the Persians were led to conjecture that something must be

secreted there. They discovered the hoard, and secured the whole. There is every reason to believe, that if the monks had not quitted their post, the Persians would not have touched any thing belonging to them; for they have at all times manifested great veneration for sacred places.

The following day we resolved to proceed to Tiflis, through Gartiskar, though these parts are not safe, since even in the time of peace they were haunted by banditti. The road from Zcheta to Tiflis, along the bank of the river Kur, runs over rocks and hills, is very steep, and so narrow that two persons can scarcely go abreast. By the way I took it into my head to loiter intentionally behind my companions, in hopes of falling into the hands of robbers, who, for the sake of their own interest, would not let me starve, but would take me with them, and perhaps sell me to an Armenian, by whom I was sure of being well treated, because I could read and write. I sat the whole day long among a heap of dead bodies, but no one came near me: the night passed away; morning succeeded; and, as though it was to be so, not a robber would pick me up. It was near noon, when I perceived a number of people who seemed to be fleeing from Tiflis. They inquired what I was doing there. I replied that I was going to Tiflis. They advised me to accompany them to Duschet and

Ananur, where the inhabitants of Tiflis had sought refuge: telling me that they only wished to see how Tiflis and their houses had fared; but that they had been informed that the Shah had turned back, and was approaching the place a second time. I declined to go with them, for I had not to expect from them even a morsel of bread: but at Tiflis I hoped to find, at least, some fruit in the gardens; and I thought it also much better for me to fall into the hands of the Persians or banditti, than to accompany them. I therefore pursued my way, paved, as it were, with carcases, and entered Tiflis by the gate of Tapitag: but what was my consternation on finding here the bodies of women and children slaughtered by the sword of the enemy; to say nothing of the men, of whom I saw more than a thousand, as I should suppose, lying dead in one little tower! The Shah had arrived at Handshu, on his way back to Tiflis, and was consequently but three wersts off. In traversing the city to the gate of Handshu, I found not a living creature but two infirm old men, whom the enemy had treated with great cruelty, to make them confess where they had concealed their money and treasures. The city was almost entirely consumed, and still continued to smoke in different places; and the stench from the putrefying bodies, together with the heat which

prevailed, was intolerable, and certainly infectious. This dreadful spectacle stopped me: I had neither strength nor courage to go out at the Handshu gate and proceed to Kerzanis, where I should probably have found fruit, and also seen the field of battle; but I turned back the same day into the way I had come, where I should at least have opportunity to seek some roots for my support. It was with difficulty, however, that I crawled out of the city. Unable to proceed farther I dropped in the road, and there I lay the rest of that day and the following night in the open air. Next morning I pursued my route to Zcheta, eating by the way roots, berries, and whatever I could find, and with great difficulty reached that place towards evening. At Zcheta I met with some straggling fugitives from Tiflis, with whom I went the following day to Duschet. Herbs, roots, and berries, were my only food. My companions were exactly like beasts; they hated me as a Persian subject, and had even, as I thought, a good mind to kill me. I passed the night at Duschet, and next day went alone to Ananur, which is situated close to the Arak. It was not without extreme difficulty that I pursued my way through these parts; for the Armenians themselves did not understand Armenian, but spoke Grusian only, and I was every where

exposed to great danger, because my garments were covered with Persian stuff. The most abject misery made no impression on their hearts. There were fifteen Armenian families at Ananur, and a small church which was scarcely capable of containing fifty persons. My strength was nearly exhausted, but the most urgent necessity impelled me to exert the last remains of it to reach the church, the entrance to which was merely closed with an iron gate. I cleansed it as well as I could from dust, set some sacred utensils in their proper places, and prayed to God, partly from the bottom of my heart, and partly, I must confess, to attract the notice of the people of the place, for I was really in want of a morsel of bread. I was joined by two Armenians, only one of whom could speak Armenian, and that very imperfectly. He asked me whence I came, whether I was a scholar, and where I was educated. In answer to his questions I merely replied, as briefly as possible, that I could read and write well, and was thoroughly conversant with the church-service and ordinances. Hereupon he asked me, whether I was willing to be their priest, as they were without one. "O yes!" I rejoined: "I am willing to be any thing, but am too weak to be more explicit." All my limbs trembled with weakness, and I could

scarcely support myself. The two Armenians were brothers and both married. They took me home with them, and consulted together what they should give me to eat, for they knew that for five of the last thirteen days I had eaten nothing but filberts, and for the other eight only herbs and roots. At length they gave me a thin *salamat*, (a kind of gruel); but simple as it was, no sooner had I taken a few spoonfuls, than all the skin was stripped from my mouth, my strength and my senses forsook me, and I remained in this state till the next morning. All the Armenians, informed of my situation by my hosts, came to see me, spoke kindly to me, and observed to one another that they had found a treasure. The mother of my new hosts in particular was extremely attentive to me, and nursed me with the greatest care, so that in a few days I was perfectly recovered. Meanwhile the Shah had actually recommenced his retreat, and already quitted Handshu. As soon as this intelligence was publicly known, the inhabitants of Tiflis, who had hidden themselves in the woods behind Duschet and Ananur, again made their appearance. The sight of so many scenes of woe made me forget my own distress. Old and young of both sexes and all ranks had thronged in crowds to Ananur, had passed day and night in the most inclement weather under

the open sky, and, without food or clothing, deplored their own fate and that of their families and friends. The father had lost his son, the son knew not what had become of his father; mothers inquired for their daughters, and daughters for their mothers; husbands were parted from their wives, and all united in one thing, that is, in filling the air with their complaints and lamentations.

Being informed that the Zar Heraklios was also at Ananur, I determined to present myself to him. I went for this purpose to the ancient Grusian convent, as the only place where I was sure of meeting with him. The convent was not large, and every where much decayed. In going over the place, I found under the arch of a ruinous cell, in a corner of the wall of the convent, a person clad in a common sheep-skin, sitting with his face to the wall; and near him stood another very aged man. I asked the latter: "Who is it that is sitting there in the corner?"—"He whom thou there seest," replied he, with a deep sigh, in Armenian, "was once a renowned personage, and his name was celebrated throughout all Asia, even in the time of Tachmas-Kuly-Chan. He was an excellent ruler of his people. He governed them forty years with glory, till age cramped his powers. To prevent discord in his family, he thought it

would conduce to the interest of his people to divide his kingdom into several parts: but the good Zar was disappointed in his hopes. A eunuch, formerly belonging to Tachmas-Kuly-Chan, and who was one of the lowest at the time when Heraklios was commander-in-chief of the Persian army, has now triumphed over the impotence of his age. His own children too denied him assistance; they would not save their country, for they were numerous, and each of them thought he was not promoting his own advantage but that of another. He was therefore necessitated to take refuge with the Zar of Imiretia. If thou wast at Tiflis thou hast certainly witnessed the disgrace which his troops there suffered. Heraklios had but a handful of men to oppose an army of 100,000, and because his children unfeelingly deserted him, he lost his throne, and to whom? To a eunuch! a creature who once bowed himself down to his feet as a slave. The glory of his long life is eclipsed; his capital is laid waste, and the prosperity of his people is converted into misery. Behind this wall the Zar of Grusia hides himself from the eyes of men, forsaken by all, and covered only with a sheep-skin. His courtiers and those who were about his person, his native subjects, whom he cherished in his bosom and supported in abundance, have all deserted him;

not one has followed his sovereign but myself, one of the lowest of the Armenians. I was in the service of his cook, and lived upon the crumbs that fell from his table; I alone was not unmindful that they were *his* crumbs: I guard him, I beg for him, and bring him the alms that I receive."—Thus did the good old man relate to me what had befallen the unfortunate sovereign, over whose fate he wept bitterly, as his most devoted slave. I looked with mingled pain and reverence at Heraklios; I would willingly have thrown myself at his feet and kissed the dust from them, but I durst not, and the Armenian would of course not have allowed me to do so, lest his master should know that he was recognised, and recognised too in a state more abject than that of a common beggar. I was involuntarily reminded of the history of my mother, and of the church and convent of Mount Arakat; I was moved to the bottom of my soul. "Ye high and mighty of the earth!" said I to myself; "behold, this is your glory, this the fruit of your achievements!—this is all your wisdom, ye weak vessels of clay!—Behold, take warning, and tremble!—The judgments of the Lord alone are mighty and infallible; and those only who put their trust in the Lord and walk in his ways, shall not be eternally lost!"—Amid these reflections, with a heart oppressed

with melancholy, I returned to my quarters, and wept the fate of the unfortunate monarch.

I had some trouble to get back to my lodgings on account of the crowds of people returning from Teulet and Stepan-Zmind, an ancient Grusian convent, dedicated to St. Stephanos, which is now deserted. To my surprise, I found at the house of my hosts the merchant who was my debtor. He entered into no explanations with me; but, as though he had an indisputable right, he sent me with his old hack to Tiflis, to look for his house, and to examine his cellar where his wife had concealed his property; after which I was to go to Kerzanis, and fetch away from his vineyard there the wine which had been made shortly before the arrival of the Shah, and which there had not been time to tun. Instead of reaching Tiflis in twenty-four hours as I ought to have done, I was three days on the road thither, for the horse could scarcely crawl. When I at length arrived, I found the house of the merchant in ruins, and the cellar plundered. Instead of the effects, there was nothing in it but two dead bodies; and in the vineyard also I found nothing, for the wine could not possibly escape their observation and rapacity. Nearly the whole city was one vast heap of ashes and ruins; and there, as well as in the suburbs, the cadaverous stench was more intolerable than

ever. At Kerzanis I fell in with inhabitants of Gasach-Bartschal, (the birth-place of my mother,) Grusian subjects, who were now returning with their families to their former habitations. One of them claimed my old steed as his property, which had been stolen from him about four months before, and some of his town's-people confirmed his statement. They were going to bind me, and take me home with them to be punished as a thief; and I had enough to do to convince them of my innocence, by informing them by whom and whence I had been sent to the city. Thus did I get away from the Gasachians, heartily glad that they had relieved me from the useless horse, on whose account I had received so many unmerciful blows; and I was now obliged to content myself with fruit, for on leaving Ananur I had brought nothing with me. I had again to subsist on herbs and roots, and as I was already accustomed to endure hunger, I thought it no great hardship to shift in this manner for three days. Near the Handshu gate, in the place of Tuoke-Maidan, I found adjoining to the church a house that was not burned nor otherwise ruined. Here I designed to remain till the following day; but I discovered in it a man stark naked, extended on the floor and scarcely breathing. On approaching nearer, I recognised in him the same person

whom I had urged to quit Tiflis with me before it was too late.

He was wounded, and had great difficulty to utter so much as to inform me that he had eaten nothing for several days. I gave him some of my fruit, and advised him to go himself to the garden and get more: but this singular fellow replied, that "he was afraid of robbers;" as if they could have taken any thing from him, or he could have been worse off than he then was. I observed, that his apprehensions now were as silly as his former confidence that the Shah would be defeated. He related to me many traits of the atrocious cruelty of the Persians, who had gone so far as to lay hold of children by one leg and try whether their sabres were sharp enough to cleave them in two at a blow. For the rest he represented the consort of the Zar Heraklios as the cause of the calamity which had befallen Tiflis: "for," said he, "when the Zar, with his brave troops was engaged at Kerzanis, the people of Tiflis would have fortified their city, and made the necessary preparations for defence; but when they saw the Zarina quit the place and seek refuge in the mountains, their courage failed; they relinquished all thoughts of defence, and fled." I left this poor fellow, because I conceived that it would be better for me to seek a house where

such thieves had taken up their quarters, who went at night into the empty houses in search of provisions. These were poor people, who were acquainted with the wealthy houses of the city, and enriched themselves by this profession in the same ratio as they impoverished those who had been rich. I actually found another house which had not been destroyed, likewise situated near a church, and belonging to Sarkis-Aga, a man highly respected, who had built the church as well as the house. In the church-yard I met an old woman, who had lost all her family, and had here entered into the service of such people as I was seeking. She was herself unfortunate, and so much the more inclined to have compassion on me, and to take me under her protection. Here then I staid four days without danger; and the more secure from thieves and robbers, as my protectors themselves followed that trade. I looked about among the rubbish in the streets for stray books, committed such as I found to the care of the old woman, and to procure food I went to the mills at the village of Wera. There I collected flour-dust, and in the stables barley, with which my old woman baked bread for me. In one of these mills I found an old acquaintance. To the caravan with which I came to Tiflis, belonged a merchant, about seventy years old. He had

married at Tiflis, and after passing about a month with his wife, according to the custom of that place, discontented with so monotonous a life, he had gone abroad into foreign countries, resided a long time in Egypt, and striven to make his fortune. At length, after an absence of upwards of forty years, he returned to Tiflis, and sought out his wife, whom he found like himself a good deal the worse for wear. She, however, did herself the justice to renounce him as soon as he entered, and drove him ignominiously away, regardless of his wealth and his superannuated passion. Plundered of his all, and covered with wounds, he had been thrown into the mill where I found him. Such was the termination of his persevering efforts for nearly half a century. He was still alive, recollected me, and begged me to get him something to eat. It was not in my power to fulfil his request, and so, I presume, he must have died the same day. I should here observe, that in Grusia and also in other contiguous districts many follow this practice: they take a young wife, live with her a few weeks, and then go out into the wide world to seek their fortune, leaving the poor woman without remorse to drag on her wretched existence alone.

On the fourth day of my residence among the thieves I was sent by my patroness to fetch

a pitcher of water. On my return from the river I saw a number of people all running towards the Tapitag gate, and I supposed them to belong to those who now made a trade of searching the houses of the city. I inquired the cause of their haste, and could scarcely believe it, when I was told, that the Shah was said to be returning, and that he was on his march for Soganlug. This story, said I to myself, is but an invention of those who wish to gain more time to complete the plunder of the houses of the unfortunate inhabitants. With this impression I gave myself no farther concern about the alarm which these people seemed to betray, and went quietly home. There, however, not a creature was left; no other asylum now remained for me but Ananur. In the house I found a bag which I filled with a large kind of pears, by us called *sergevil*, but at Tiflis *komschi*, with the intention of carrying them as a present to my hosts. I took the same road I had come, and passed the night on a high hill near the river. The next night I slept at the convent of Zcheta, through which place great numbers of people of all classes were then passing: I laid my bag of fruit under my head; but in the morning when I awoke, to my great mortification I could not find either the bag or the pears I was as

much vexed as if I had lost a great treasure; for it was out of real attachment to my hosts that I had loaded myself in these hot days with so heavy a burden, merely to give them a token, how insignificant soever, of my gratitude. On my arrival at Ananur I was met by the merchant and his wife, who were expecting me with impatience: I related to them all that I had seen and heard of their late house, and how the horse had been taken from me by the Gasach people. But the unreasonable fellow abused me and boxed my ears, because I had not, at least, brought back the *palan*, (a kind of saddle,) weighing full a *pud*, or thirty-seven pounds; as though I had been strong enough to oppose several hundred men.

My hosts and others also spoke to me on the subject, and asked why I put up with such ill-treatment from this man. They advised me to repay him in his own coin: but I, still hoping to get to Russia through his assistance, had made up my mind to endure every thing, being firmly resolved not to quit him, and of course not to fulfil the hopes of the Ananurains by becoming their minister. I therefore replied with feigned meekness, that, according to the precepts of Jesus, it was our duty to bear all tribulations with patience. This time I found but few people at Ananur, for, during

my absence at Tiflis, most of them had removed to Kachetia, where they hoped to gain a more easy subsistence.

On the second or third day after my return, the Zarina Darishan, consort of Heraklios, passed through Ananur, on her way from Stepan-Zmind in Kachetia. Here she was detained by the populace, who with one voice charged her with having occasioned their misery, forgetting the respect due to her person, and carrying their animosity to such a pitch, that they not only assailed her with the most indecorous and opprobrious epithets, but that her life itself was in danger.

About four days later, the robbers of Tiflis actually circulated a report that the Shah was again advancing, with the intention to which I have already adverted. In the general confusion, six respectable Armenian families of Ananur, and among them my hosts, determined to remove a day's journey farther to the inhabitants of Teulet, in the village of Tschocha. My merchant also resolved to accompany them with his family. We took up our quarters at Tschocha, in one of the three houses there, belonging to an alderman, named Scharo. The Teuletians are Georgian subjects, and though of the Christian religion, yet a completely savage tribe. Ananur, Dusched, and other small

places in the mountains on each side of the Arak, and in short the whole district of Chewsur, were, according to the partition made by Heraklios, under the authority of the Zarewitsch Bachtang. The hamlets of Teulet consisted of no more than from two to five houses, and some of one only; and in these there was neither window nor chimney. All the light they have enters at the door, and therefore it is so dark in these habitations, that it is necessary to burn either pine splinters or birch bark in them all day long. The houses there have two roofs; the lower roof is so strong, that, according to the custom of the country, horse-mills may be constructed upon it, while the upper affords protection from the weather. The bread is made of equal parts of barley and bean-meal, and baked in large earthen vessels, with a rim like our plates; they lay one upon another, and make a fire underneath both. When the dishes are quite hot they put the dough, which they have in readiness, into them, and strew it pretty thick with heated salt. This kind of bread is there called *kezi*. They never dress animal food till it begins to smell, or more properly speaking, to putrefy. They are not very cleanly in their houses, for they keep their cattle in the same room with themselves, merely tying them up to the wall. Amid

the general distress I was of course frequently exposed to want, but to lighten its pressure, I lent my services to any family that needed them, and if I had not something given me to eat at one place I had at another: but it was very seldom that I got a bellyful.

In the village of Tschocha there was a small church but it had no priest. There was nothing in it but some altar-cloths of coarse linen. Round this edifice grew wild pear-trees, the fruit of which no one durst pick, for it belonged to the church, and was therefore held sacred. I was informed of this circumstance, and told that if I violated the custom I might even lose my life: yet, notwithstanding this prohibition, I was too strongly pressed by hunger in the first days after my arrival at Tschocha, before I had any acquaintance there, to resist the temptation of plucking some of the fruit at night. But besides being frozen, for the weather was then very cold, they were so unripe as to affect my teeth to such a degree that I could not even eat bread afterwards, and moreover ran the risk of being punished for stealing the sacred fruit. But I cured my teeth by chewing the only bit of wax-taper which I found in the church. In the sequel I went almost every evening to read the evening service and prayers to Goloenez Bagdasar, an aged

inhabitant of Tiflis, who had removed thither from the Turkish territory. He and his wife became much attached to me, and gave me sufficient proofs of their kindness, and thenceforward I suffered no want. My hosts too continued to do what they could for me, but I had to endure the severest mortifications from my merchant. This wicked man was here the cause of an adventure which was not less ludicrous than the consequences were painful to me. He once sent me to another village, situated beyond the first hill not far from Tschocha, to buy chaff for his horses, teaching me to ask for it in the Grusian words: *Bse aragak gasas gideh*, which literally signify: Is chaff sold here? These words I kept repeating as I went along, that I might not forget them; but when I reached the village, and began to consider to which house I should go first, I selected the largest of them, but forgot all the words excepting *bse*. I entered the house, which I found full of smoke, and so dark that I could only just see to avoid the cattle in my way to the fire. There I perceived a woman making bread, to whom I repeatedly called out *bse*. She stared at me, crossed herself, and exclaiming "Christ Jesus!" away she ran. I had not the least suspicion of what was to follow, but on the other hand imagined that she was

very good-natured, and had gone to fetch the chaff without telling me how much it would cost to fill such a sack as I had brought with me. Instead of her returning with the chaff, the room was in a few minutes crowded with people, each carrying a cudgel or some other weapon in one hand, and a splinter of pine or a piece of birch bark in the other. They slowly approached me, crossed themselves, and ejaculated "Christ Jesus!" They [illegible] me no time to consider what the meaning of all this might be, but suddenly fell upon me, threw me down, tore out my hair, burned half of my shabby *kaftan*, dragged me to and fro, and almost stifled me. "I am a Christian!" cried I to them in Turkish, Persian, and Armenian, but to no purpose; they dragged me out of the house, and while some one fetched a cord, at least ten of them held me fast, some by the hands, others by my clothes, others by the hair, and one even by the lower lip. The cord was tied about my neck, several of them held it at both ends, and in this manner I was led to the village where we lived, before the above-mentioned alderman, Scharo, while others in the rear occasionally urged me forward with kicks. Besides being bruised with this treatment, I was so scorched in many places that the greatest part of my hair and even my eye-

brows were burned away. I was totally at a loss to conceive the reason of all this uproar, but was sensible enough of the pain I suffered. No sooner had we reached the top of the hill than, fortunately for me, the procession was seen from our village. The alderman hastened to meet me, and persuaded the demi-savages, but not without great difficulty, to set me at liberty. The cause of this treatment, as I afterwards learned, was, that the woman, whom I first accosted, as well as all the others, had never seen any person with an Erivan covering over his clothes: the former, alarmed by my sudden appearance, took me for the familiar spirit of the house, and confirmed the rest in this belief. They pulled out my hair from a notion that unless a familiar spirit is thus treated it conceals itself, but on the other hand it is obliged to serve invisibly the person who tears up its hair as long as it remains in the house. Be this as it may, it was a fortnight before I recovered the effects of this usage; and my hosts and Bagdasar and his wife had enough to do to nurse me and to anoint my burns with oil and goose-grease.

Bagdasar took notice of the merchant's ill-treatment of me and of my melancholy situation. As soon as I had recovered, he begged me to relate to him circumstantially how and

by what means I had fallen into this man's hands. I willingly informed him of every thing worth mentioning that had befallen me; and he was so affected that he embraced me with tears, and exhorted me to put my trust in the grace and support of the Almighty. On learning that I had not been delivered up to the merchant to be his slave, but that he had promised to take me to Russia, and had been paid thirty rubles on this account, he promised to send me with his son to Kislar. He went with me immediately to our lodging to have an explanation with the merchant on the subject of what he had undertaken to do for me; told him that he would himself forward me to Russia; and insisted on his returning to me the thirty rubles which he had received at Wagarschapat. The unprincipled man had probably not enough money to settle with me, and alleged that he had promised to take me to Russia when he travelled thither himself; and that I must therefore wait till it suited him to go. Hereupon Bagdasar called him a thief, and reproached him for his inhuman behaviour to me, predicting that as he had already lost his property, so he would be sure to lose whatever he might hereafter acquire, as a punishment for the injury done by him to an orphan: he took from him my church-books and Sagak's

ink-stand, and advised me to leave the whole matter to the judgment of God.

Bagdasar had two sons: the elder he kept at home, and was sending the youngest to Kislar, to form a connexion there with a merchant who possessed no property, and to begin a trade, for which he intended to advance a small capital as soon as his son arrived in Russia. He had been very rich, but, like many others, had lost great part of his fortune by the oppression formerly very common in Grusia, by which a man was frequently drained to the utmost. His younger son, with whom I was to travel, he now committed to the charge of one of his friends from Kislar, who, on hearing of the Shah's invasion, had come expressly to learn the fate of his nearest relatives, who resided at Tiflis; but unable to get so far, he had stopped at Ananur, and was just at this time at Tschocha. Bagdasar consulted this man, whose name was Moses, what I should want by the way, and particularly concerning the payment of the escort, commonly hired to accompany travellers from Stepan-Zmind to Mosdok; he earnestly solicited him to take as much care of me on the road as of his son, and in the evening he exhorted me to be always upright and honest, and then I should thrive, as he hoped and indeed foresaw, for I should certainly follow his

advice better than his own son; telling me, that if he did good for me it was as well out of affection for me as to render the Almighty propitious to his son. Moses had been meanwhile collecting a party of travelling companions at Ananur; I therefore took leave of my kind hosts, expressed my gratitude to them because they had not abandoned me, alleged the general insecurity as an excuse for not remaining with them, and promised to bear their liberality in everlasting remembrance. We were joined by nine Grusians, who were returning to Mosdok or Kislar, and set out early on the 1st of December for Stepan-Zmind. Bagdasar gave me an old woollen *kaftan* of his son's, repeated his good counsel, and wished me all possible happiness. By noon the following day we were at Stepan-Zmind, whither the Grusian dominions extend, but which is inhabited by Osetians and some Tscherkassians only. Both on the road and at Stepan-Zmind I suffered much from hunger for five successive days; for I had no money whatever, and therefore could not purchase bread, nor could I, without great difficulty and severe reproaches, beg a morsel from my hard-hearted fellow-travellers, the son of my benefactor treating me very differently from his father. But when we reached Wladikawkask, fortunately for me an Osetian had

just died, and at the celebration of his funeral his relatives, agreeably to the custom prevalent there, sent a great quantity of meat, bread, and *busy*, (a pretty strong and nutritious beverage,) to our caravan. Eight pounds of meat besides bread fell to my share, for which I heartily thanked God, and wished the deceased all possible repose and happiness in the other world.

Here we stopped two days till we had agreed with a *baschtschu* of the place and his party to escort our caravan to Mosdok. The charge for such an escort is in general from ten to fifteen pieces of silver per head. An Armenian of our caravan, observing that I was wretchedly clothed for the season, and that the soles of my boots were almost worn out, took compassion on me, and lent me a mantle of *woilok*, (coarse felt,) which is there manufactured of goat's hair, chiefly for the use of the mountaineers. We were not much more than twenty-four hours in travelling from Stepan-Zmind to Wladikawkask, where we slept; but according to the arrangements of our *baschtscha*, we set out unobserved in the evening in order to avail ourselves of the darkness, so that on the following morning we had reached the Tscherkassian village of Achelgabach, because this part of the road is most exposed to the attacks of the mountain banditti. With all our haste we were

obliged to be careful not to make the slightest noise. On this same road I was twice very near losing my life. In order not to be left behind the caravan, the other Armenian and I went before the horsemen. My mantle heated me to such a degree that my strength soon forsook me, and nothing but absolute necessity and fear made me exert myself that I might not be left behind in the unknown wilderness, and fall into the hands of banditti, or what would have been still worse, into the clutches of wild beasts. I would have requested the owner of the mantle to relieve me from it for a time, but was afraid lest he should refuse to let me have it again when I might want it, and therefore resolved to hold out to the very last. The rime adhered to the mantle and covered it almost all over with icicles, by which it was rendered still heavier. At length about midnight I sunk down quite exhausted, without having the power to rise or even to cry out; and I must have perished on the spot had not one of the escort, perceiving my situation, come up to me and asked what I would give him to take me up on his horse for a space, till I should recover my strength. I gave him the *fas* (a kind of close covering for the head) which I wore under my cap. After thus riding about a werst I was obliged to dismount, being almost frozen with

the cold. To divert my mind from the pain I felt, and to shorten the way, I repeated prayers and psalms suitable to my situation. The way, however, was long, and my strength again failed me. I had already determined to stay behind, but fear impelled me to make one more effort. I mustered all my strength and ran along again, in hopes that it would soon be over, but still there was no end to it. Bitter tears trickled down my cheeks; I repeated the prayer addressed to God by Jonas when he was in the whale's belly, till I again dropped from weakness, and prayed for death. None of my Christian companions took the least notice of me, or rather none of them would, like the Pagan Osetian, render me assistance, to prevent my sinking into a mortal languor. I was not sensible how long I lay on the spot, nor how I was carried to Achelgabach, cleared from the snow and wrapped in *woilok*, for I was absolutely frozen, and my toes had turned as black as coal. It was not till noon that I awoke from my stupor, and was informed of what had happened to me. I was indebted to the Osetians alone for my preservation; and I again prayed heartily for their deceased countryman, since, but for his funeral donation, I should have perished with cold. They smeared my feet with goose-grease, by which I was completely

restored, excepting the pain that I still feel when the weather is frosty.

On the 9th of December we left Achelgabach, and halted on the 10th in a wood near the river Terek and opposite to Mosdok. In paying the *baschtscha* and his party difficulties arose on account of ready money, but at last there were only eighty copecks remaining, which the caravan promised to send in two hours from Mosdok: but as the Osetians refused to trust, and demanded a hostage for the payment of that sum, this lot fell upon me. Instead of two hours two days elapsed, and the Armenians did not send the money. Meanwhile our escort provided themselves with necessaries in the town, and intended to set out early in the morning of the 12th on their return home; but, in comparison with my fellow-travellers, they were so liberal, that they only enjoined me strictly to procure the money, and threatened to take me with them in case I could not. I was already despairing of success, when luckily I met on the bank of the river a man in a green *chineille*: from the close garments which he wore underneath it he must have been a European, or, according to the term universally employed there, a Frank, and of course a Russian. I ran up to him immediately, threw myself at his feet, and implored him in Turkish to take

compassion on me, and to redeem me from the Osetians. The Osetians and Tscherkassians frequently travel to Mosdok, and hence many of them understand Russian: one of the escort, therefore, who knew something of Turkish, acted as interpreter; informed the stranger of the sufferings which I had endured by the way, and the manner in which I had been left in pledge; adding, that he for his part would cheerfully consent to my release, but it did not depend on him alone. The Russian recrossed the river without delay, and communicated the matter to the commandant: the latter sent in quest of the Kislarite, and compelled him to ransom me. All this did not occupy above two hours.

On the same day, which was the third after my arrival at the Terek, I heard, while yet an hostage, an extraordinary ringing from the steeples of the churches. This sound greeted my ears for the first time since my leaving Tiflis, before it was taken by the Shah, and it threw me into such extasy that, had even a worse calamity befallen me at this place by favour of the Kislarite and his Armenian fellow-travellers, I could have died with joy.

As soon as I reached the city I was obliged to go in quest of Moses, from whom I had not indeed experienced any particular kindness; but

there was no other to whom I could have recourse. While I was seeking him I asked all the Armenians I met the cause of the ringing of the bells. It was a long time before I could make out from their answers that it was some festival, and still less what—for the Armenians of this place are Grusians in point of language, and know nothing of Armenian. At last I comprehended thus much, that it was the birthday of the son of the sovereign. Notwithstanding my unpleasant situation, this circumstance gave me great joy, and I thanked God for having brought me into a Christian land, and that too on the anniversary of an imperial festival. I found Moses in the market-place of Mosdok, where he, together with Bagdasar's son, had taken up his quarters with a merchant of his acquaintance, who was likewise an Armenian, and who, being unmarried, lived close to his shop, in apartments built contiguous to it in the interior of the court-yard. A place was allotted to me in the kitchen, where a very good bed was made up for Bagdasar's son also. I was provided with a good supper, after which I lay down to rest upon straw mats; but this couch I was destined soon to lose. For a reason which decorum forbids me to mention, the merchant was so incensed, that two hours before day-break he called up his boy, and ordered him to strike a

light, and turn me out of the house, adding, that he would not bear the smell of me any longer in the same place with him. I was aware of the heinousness of my crime in refusing to comply with a practice of the Asiatics, by which probably I offended also the son of Bagdasar, my benefactor. By his command I did not then venture either to vindicate myself or to sue for mercy, but submitted in silence to the dreadful sentence. As soon as I was in the street, I implored the boy in the most earnest manner to take some pity on me, and to tell me to whom I could have recourse, for it was intensely cold: I had nothing on but my woollen *kaftan*, and my boots were without soles. The boy complained that he had himself a great deal to suffer from his master; he strove to cheer me up under my misfortune, and advised me to apply to a woman who sold bread; telling me that she was in great affliction on account of her only son, who had gone with a merchant to Tiflis, and whom she had given up for lost. I found the house, complained to her that, as a foreigner, I had no asylum at Mosdok, and begged that for her son's sake she would take compassion on me, and at least allow me some corner to lie down in. She was deeply affected by the mention of her son, and perceiving that I trembled with cold, she immediately desired her girl to conduct me to

the room where she baked her bread. After passing two days here in perfect quiet, she proposed to me to carry her bread about the town and sell it for her, which I cheerfully agreed to do, though it was extremely cold and I almost barefoot. At any rate I was likely to have enough to eat. She showed me a *grosch* (a copper coin of the value of two copecks) as the price I was to demand for each loaf, and taught me to cry in Grusian: *zcheli, zcheli puri*—"hot loaves!" My new trade, however, lasted but four days. At one place I delivered ten loaves on trust, one I ate every day while I was out with them, and some were probably stolen from me: in short, my employer, finding that she was likely to lose more than she could gain by me, told me to take the twenty copecks for the loaves sold on credit, and not to give myself any farther trouble on her account. She never mentioned a syllable respecting her motive for my dismissal. I hastened immediately to the merchant's boy, informed him of my ill luck, and solicited his assistance. By his recommendation I went to a watchman belonging to the market, that through his means I might become acquainted with the tradesmen there, and learn to be of service to them. My agreement with this man was, that I should serve him a week at my own cost: my employment consisted chiefly in cleaving wood and fetching

water. The boy desired me to come to him privately in the evening when it was dark, that he might give me something to eat, and lent me a bear-skin, which happened to be just then in his warehouse, to keep me warm at night: but the hewing of wood from morning to night was a labour which I could not pursue for the week according to my agreement. My arms seemed ready to drop off, and it was impossible for me to raise them. My young friend advised me to give up the watchman, procured me a pair of boots, which, though old, were whole and strong, told me I ought if possible to get a *tulup* (a wide pelisse with sleeves, reaching down to the ankles, commonly of wool, covered with nankin or some other light stuff), and asked me if I had nothing to dispose of. I had nothing in the world but a Church Calendar, a Psalter, and a collection of the prayers read during divine service in our churches. These books, printed in the chief Armenian convent, might indeed be considered as curiosities, for not a person at Mosdok possessed them, and in other places they are rare: but at Mosdok in particular there were no scholars capable of appreciating their value, or to purchase them at a fair price: the only individual there to whom they could be offered was the Armenian deacon. To him I at first showed the

Calendar only, but the unconscionable man teazed me till I parted with the others, for which I had myself paid at the convent three rubles in silver, and which would certainly otherwise have cost him fifteen at Mosdok. He gave me however, for all of them, an old shabby *tulup*, worth a ruble at the utmost. Painful as it was to me to part with these, my spiritual travelling companions, I had no other means of helping myself in my extreme distress. The lad meanwhile continued to supply me with food in the evening, and to wrap me up at night in his skins, so that I slept quite comfortably. In a few days he told me that the Kislarite was preparing to return home, and advised me to beg him to take me along with him to Kislar, where it would be easier for me to gain a livelihood. I went accordingly to Moses, and intreated him to grant me this last favour; he at first refused it with the most opprobrious language, but I at length moved him by my incessant importunity, and probably still more by the assurance that I should not be at all troublesome to him. My readers will not fail to remark here how hard-hearted men can be to one another; for my part I cannot help doubting, whether individuals of any other nation could so obdurately have denied their assistance to an unfortunate fellow-

creature in extreme distress, when sure that he would not cause them either trouble, vexation, or the smallest expense.

My generous young friend took leave of me with the greatest emotion, and gave me a loaf of bread and twenty copecks in copper for my subsistence by the way. Thus I quitted Mosdok on the 28th of December, and set out on foot for Kislar. Moses travelled in a Nogay *kibitka*, called *araba*, and at half way his philanthropy left me in the lurch. I arrived at Kislar on the 3rd of January, 1796, with some Nogay Tartars, who showed me much kindness; but at that place there was none to whom I could apply excepting Moses, hard-hearted as he had always shown himself to me. I sought him out therefore, and with the utmost humility solicited him to employ me as a labourer in his gardens, since I had some experience in that way. He acceded to my request, and presented me to his father for his approval. This old man, the worthy father of such a son, eyed me with a look of enmity and scorn. "No," cried he, "I have no occasion for thee!" and immediately ordered me to be turned out of the house, for I was not a Grusian Armenian, but a native of Armenia Proper, adding: "Get thee gone to thy countryman, the priest; he will take thee in." His servant took me by the hand and pulled me out. As

soon as I was out of the room I begged the man to favour me with the name and address of the priest. In reply he first furnished me with a clue to the treatment which I had experienced. "When you get into the street," said he, "look at our windows; you will see them all shut up, that the poor may not beg before them. In the fifteen years that I have lived with my master I have never seen him give any thing away, and he even weighs out our bread to us. He has not taken thee, because thou wouldst have been three days in learning thy duty, and wouldst consequently during that time have been eating his bread for nothing. I would willingly show thee where the priest lives, but should be afraid to stay out so long. His name is Luka. Keep straight on down this street, and ask any one thou meetest." With these words he left me, and hastened back. I had considerable difficulty to find out the priest. The Armenians of Kislar had no great affection for poor Luka, because he was an upright man, strict in his duty, and wiser than many others. Having with great trouble at last discovered his house, I solicited his aid and protection. He told me to go to the church, and to desire the sacristan, from him, to give me a lodging till he could speak to him. I expected that the sacristan would receive this message with due respect, but being just then much

intoxicated, he greeted me with a variety of epithets, not of the most honourable kind, abused the priest also, and cried: "What right has he to command me to take in every beggar that comes in his way?" He turned a deaf ear to my earnest entreaty that he would give me a lodging till morning, for evening was already approaching; on which I went back to the priest, and informed him of the reception I had met with. He took the trouble to return with me himself; but though the priest shouted to him and shook him, he could not make him either speak or hear. He commanded me to stay there till morning. Hungry as I was, and fearful lest my host might awake and treat me not in the most hospitable manner, I could not sleep a wink all night. He did not awake, however, before morning. "What!" cried he, as soon as he saw me, "thou here!"—I told him most submissively that the priest himself had brought me thither, but would not disturb him. Meanwhile the people began to assemble to morning service. I now prayed with my whole heart to God, but nevertheless did not omit to show myself off a little. I commenced beforehand each successive lesson, every hymn, and likewise the Gospels, for I knew the whole church-service by rote, as well as all the alterations caused by particular festivals. This was noticed by many;

but none expressed any interest on the occasion, excepting the sacristan, and an excellent young man, named Melkon Surabow. The latter asked me, immediately after the service, who I was and whence I came. I threw myself at his feet, acquainted him with my forlorn situation, and begged him to allow me to remain at the church till I could find some other occupation. He kindly acceded to my request, gave me necessary directions to the sacristan, and sent me from home some bread, of which, God knows, I had great need, for I had not eaten any thing for more than twenty-four hours. Meanwhile the sacristan drank heartily, and went home altogether, on which I was directed to officiate in his stead: but on the following day, being the anniversary of the birth of Christ, which is celebrated among us, together with the festival of the baptism, on the 6th of January, when, according to the custom of our church, the priests go round to the inhabitants with the cross and holy water, he did not fail to make his appearance, and to pocket his share of the contributions. This was no profit to me; I therefore applied to Luka, the priest, and requested him to procure me some situation, on which, through his recommendation, I was appointed watchman in the market, with a salary of ten rubles per month.

The market-place is situated in an extensive

field at one extremity of the town. There were just then at Kislar many troops who were going to Derbent. The first two nights after my appointment passed off without disturbance, but we had visitors in the third. Six shops were broken open; the thieves took such goods as they thought fit, and strewed the rest about the field. On this occasion myself and two other watchmen took care of our own persons only; that is to say, we hid ourselves as well as we could. At first I was going to cry out *charai!* which signifies "watch!" but on second thoughts deemed it better to sneak off. Next morning I went to the priest, acquainted him with the circumstance and resigned my office. The shopkeepers would not employ me any more. The priest soon obtained other occupation for me, namely, to thresh Turkey corn in the houses round about, by which I earned a ruble per day besides the bread and wine that were given me. This lasted some time, when I went to work for a man of property. His son, who had already learned to read and write, begged me to teach or explain to him this and that, and especially several marks in the Calendar. Now it appears to me, that faithful services are entitled to gratitude: my master, on the contrary, was so offended on account of my poverty and shabby dress, that he loaded me with all sorts of opprobrious epithets, called my

behaviour intolerable impudence, and repeatedly cried:—"How couldst thou, a ragged beggar, pretend to instruct the son of a man like myself!" To convince me the more feelingly of my hardihood, he gave me two or three smart thumps on the head, and thrust me out of the house. I was much less mortified by this treatment than astonished at the extreme stupidity of my employer.

I was thoroughly convinced by this powerful argument of the necessity of dressing better, and in consequence of the habitual drunkenness of the sacristan, with whom, by the permission of the churchwarden, I continued to reside at the church, I bought myself a very handsome *kaftan* and good trowsers with less than two rubles of my earnings. About the same time our priest gave me a very good plush cap. I was not a little proud of my new dress, especially since people, who had heretofore treated me with scorn, when they saw my fine clothes began to praise me, and, as I overheard on more than one occasion, exclaimed to one another: "What an intelligent man! what an excellent scholar! how well and how fluently he reads! he knows every thing," and the like. All this served but to impress me the more deeply with the wonderful effects of a good coat, and I thanked God for affording me the opportunity of

earning money and buying clothes so cheaply. The good elder was glad that his fellow-townsmen had changed their opinion so much concerning me, and in a few days he informed me that, in consideration of my learning, they wished, on his recommendation, to appoint me assistant to the deacon, and asked me what I thought of it. I accepted the proposal with joy, and expressed my warmest thanks to the elder. The deacon, however, had now become my irreconcileable enemy: he declared to the congregation, that if I were appointed he would immediately resign his office, and in consequence they thought it best to relinquish their intention. The cause of the deacon's hostility to me was this:—He taught the children to read, but without explaining any thing to them, on which I conceived doubts as to his capability. Some time before the elder made the abovementioned proposal to me, I met with him at the sacristan's, and requested him to expound to me the meaning of a certain text of Scripture. Quite confused and unable to answer, he imagined that I wanted to examine him, and was so exasperated by my question, that he abused me in a rather unclerical style, would have pushed me out of doors, and could scarcely refrain from beating me. He then went immediately to the inhabitant of the next house, Stepan, surnamed

Wryneck, where he complained not only of me, but also of the elder, for keeping me about the church. Wryneck, who coincided in sentiments with him, enumerated to the congregation many really silly, but in his opinion important reasons, why I ought not to be allowed to reside at the church. The elder now found it necessary to adopt different measures, and concerted with the sacristan that I should lodge secretly at the church, and only come thither in the evening when no person observed me. Meanwhile I sought from time to time to procure employment, by which to earn a livelihood. On the 14th of February, when we celebrate the purification of the Virgin Mary, shortly before evening service, the eldest son of a distinguished person of Kislar came to me, and begged me to try whether I could not detect some serious blunders in the performance of the service by the eldest protopope. I willingly undertook this commission, placed myself very near him, and when the protopope was reading the Gospel, I said it softly to myself, but yet loudly enough to be heard by many who stood round me. He was thereby confused, and still more so when he remarked that the bystanders heard it: as soon, therefore, as the Gospel was finished, he ordered me to be turned out of the church, which was immediately done. Though I had

richly deserved this, yet some of the inhabitants told him I was in the right, and that it was wrong in him to treat me as he did. From the church I went straightway to the person through whom I had brought this expulsion on myself; he received me very kindly, and entertained me at his house four successive days. His father and his brothers and sisters also conceived a partiality for me, and in the sequel I could always have recourse to them in case of need. The priests, who were proud and arrogant, thenceforward hated me with all their hearts, but the more peaceably disposed persons were much attached to me; we were frequently together, conversing on the subject of the Holy Scriptures, and they were highly pleased with my elucidations.

On the 29th of February, for 1796 was leap-year, there occurred a circumstance, the blame of which was laid upon the priests. In our evening-service on that day some pages of our month-books,* containing the genealogy of Abraham to the twelth generation, are read. To save time it is necessary to read this passage very rapidly; but there was none who could do

* The book containing the service and lives of the saints for every day in the year is called *menija*, that is, monthly, because it is divided according to the months.—*Translator.*

this besides myself. The elder desired me to undertake this task, which I executed to the general satisfaction. The priests, however, from three to six of whom are attached to each of our churches, and the deacons also, asserted that I had omitted more than half. The elder was extremely vexed; he requested all present to wait a little while I read a second time, and to take notice whether I omitted any thing or not. Another month-book was brought. I read out of one, while three persons followed me in the other. To display my abilities I now read more rapidly than before, so that they could scarcely keep up with me; but they unanimously declared that I had left out nothing. The elder as well as the others, made in consequence some remarks not of the most pleasant nature to the priests who had accused me. When the service was over the elder sent me a fine loaf, a large flask of wine, and half a ruble in money. I was very merry that evening, and shared the present with an old man, a native of Handshu, who had been at Jerusalem, and who lived at the church. We emptied the flask to the last drop, and the wine soon threw us into a sound sleep. About midnight we heard a great noise and knocking on the roof and at the doors. We sprung up in great alarm, and the old man began to abuse me for having, as he supposed,

been boasting to some person or other of possessing fifty copecks, for which they were now come to plunder, and perhaps to murder us: I reminded him that I had not stirred out, but had passed the whole evening with him. Meanwhile some of our visitors had descended the chimney, and others broken open the door. At first I hid myself in a corner, from which I presently crept under cover of the darkness, and got to the bell-rope and rung away. The unwelcome guests fell upon the old man and demanded his money, but as neither could understand the other, they began to beat and he to cry out. On hearing the alarm-bell the people thronged to the spot, but the poor old man was so severely beaten that sighs were the only signs of life that he manifested: for the rest he was quite insensible, and indeed it would have required but little to make him so. They asked me where the fire was. "There," said I, pointing to the old man, "there is all the fire," and related to them the cause of the alarm. Wryneck immediately charged me with being the occasion of it, adding, that the elder had deceived them with the assurance that I was no longer living at the church, and he insisted that I should be conducted to the guard-house. Though the elder remonstrated, and urged that I had done nothing wrong, yet he could effect no more by

his interference than prevent my being sent to the guard-house. He told me that in future he durst not render me any farther assistance than in letting me come to his house, and that only in private, when I had nothing to eat; that he would cheerfully allow me a certain sum monthly, but to take me into his house and keep me there seemed a dangerous experiment, since it would be almost like setting himself in opposition to the whole congregation, and would particularly exasperate the clergy, who were my bitterest enemies. "And they," added he, "with very few exceptions, strive to revenge supposed affronts three-fold, four-fold, and even more severely if possible; and they would of course seek every opportunity of injuring me, if I were publicly to afford thee protection."

Next morning I went to Luka, the priest, and complained to him of my new misfortune. He advised me to engage myself as a labourer in some of the vineyards, where it is usual to pay fifty rubles for six months, with which money I might in winter carry on some traffic or other. He actually recommended me the same day to the proprietor of a vineyard, seven wersts from the town. It was in the first week of Lent that I removed thither. The gardener asked me on my arrival if I knew any thing of gardening. "In my own country," I replied, "I know well

what is to be done; but here I must first see how you proceed." His envy, because my master had promised me so much money, and I had yet to learn what was to be done, immediately betrayed itself: he abused me unmercifully. I begged him more than once, with the utmost submission and almost with tears, to show me what to do, but all in vain: the hard-hearted man continued inexorable. I went to other vineyards, and there sought to observe if possible what I wished to know. The gardener, however, gave me not an hour's rest; and not content with abusing me, he frequently proceeded to blows and kept me on very hard fare. I once took courage to tell him, that as he had been a prisoner himself, he must know from experience how painful ill-usage was; that as he could not have known every thing of himself, there must have been good people who instructed him; he ought, therefore, to judge by himself, to fear God, and not treat others so cruelly. So far from being moved by my remonstrances, he on the contrary regarded my language as too audacious, beat me worse than before, and seemed more intent than ever on making my situation as uncomfortable as possible, so that I had no rest even at night. It was also a great grief to me that for six weeks I could not go to church: at length I lost all patience, and the

day before Palm Sunday, when I heard the bells ringing for evening service, I left the vineyard and went to town, first of all repairing to the church, and then calling on the priest and acquainting him with my situation. Sincerely concerned for what I had suffered, he acknowledged that I should scarcely have been able to follow that employment during the summer, on account of the many troublesome insects, especially mosquitoes, by which the vineyards are infested; and therefore proposed to me to enter into the military service, and accompany the Russian troops to Persia, where, with the zeal and fidelity which he knew me to possess, I could not fail to make myself extremely useful: adding that Count Valerian Subow, the commander-in-chief of the troops, was a very benevolent man, and he would moreover recommend me to Major S—, an Armenian, who accompanied the Count in the capacity of translator. This proposal I joyfully accepted, and the good priest went immediately to Mr. S—, who gave him his word of honour to make me comfortable, which he might the more readily promise to do, because such persons as are acquainted with the languages and customs of those parts may be employed to very good purpose. At the same time he had a great deal to say concerning the importance of his post,

and the remunerations which he had it in his power to bestow on the persons belonging to his suite; for it would depend on himself to reward them with promotion, or with pensions for life, or out of his private income arising from villages in the Crimea, adding that to me in particular, if I served him with zeal and fidelity, he would allow, in consideration of the strong recommendation which I had from the priest, a pension of one thousand rubles per annum: in short, he would treat me in such a manner as to astonish all the Armenians. The good priest, in the simplicity of his heart, gave a ready belief to these promises; he hurried home, and breathless with haste announced to me exultingly my future good fortune, and would have conducted me immediately to Mr. S—. I was transported with this unexpected intelligence, but first wished to settle with the Kislarite for my six weeks' work in his vineyard: a plan to which the priest reluctantly consented, as if apprehensive that another might come in the mean time and run away with my chance. My employer, regardless of the work I had done and my necessities, refused to pay me any thing, because I had not served the stipulated term. The priest allowed me no time to speak with him, and made the more haste with me to Major S—. We found with him many Ar-

menians of Kislar, who had come to pay their respects to him. He was just then engaged in looking over the payments he had to make, which he went through twice, probably that he might be taken for a man who was ready to extend his bounty to all, or who was in the habit of paying away large sums of money. When the priest had introduced me to him with the utmost humility, his first question was what salary I expected; and, as if to spare me the trouble of answering, he immediately added:—"At any rate thou mayst reckon upon a thousand rubles." This prospect overpowered me to such a degree, that I trembled for joy in every limb: I promised to serve him with fidelity and zeal to the last drop of my blood. He then inquired whether I understood French or German, or any other European language. To save him the trouble of naming any more, I told him that I was a native of Persia, and could speak only Armenian, Persian, and Turkish. The Armenians observed, that he doubtless knew all the languages he had mentioned. "All," replied he: on which they loudly expressed their astonishment. Hereupon Mr. S— related to those present the important transactions in which he had been employed, and the distinctions conferred upon him. These stories they swallowed without the least scruple,

and were filled with the highest admiration of his importance, but especially two, the priest and myself. A circumstance which contributed not a little to induce me to believe all he said was this:—I had not yet seen any powdered head, and took the colour of Mr. S—'s for the silver hue of age, saying to myself: Can so venerable a man be an impostor?—At length the priest took his leave, having previously commended me to his favour and protection, given me his warmest blessing, and wished me all possible happiness. I remained of course with Mr. S—, who engaged four Armenians besides myself. One of these, as I was afterwards informed, had squandered all his patrimonial property at Astrachan; the second, Enoch, had kept a bath, and had scarcely any knowledge of his religion; the third was well known as a good-for-nothing fellow at Kislar; and the fourth was a notorious slanderer and scandal-monger: all four were exceedingly fond of wine, but in this particular the first surpassed all his comrades. Mr. S— assigned to me the duty of going before on a march, pitching his Calmuck tent agreeably to the directions of the quartermaster, and foddering the horses. I was regularly taught to perform these offices, from which, however, I could not for the life of me anticipate the realization of the fair pros-

pects which the priest had held out to me: on the contrary I began from day to day to entertain stronger doubts on the subject, and at length resolved to communicate them to the priest, at the same time describing to him the qualities of the persons composing the suite of Mr. S—. He pacified me by representing that he probably wished only to try me, exhorting me to have patience and to await the issue.

My comrades having nothing to do, amused themselves the whole Passion-week with drinking, while I, having no time to stir from my quarters, suffered much from want, even of bread itself. To them also Mr. S— had promised every kind of prosperity, and they talked of their good luck to all the Armenians of Kislar, who were the more ready to believe the account the less they knew of the character of Mr. S—, and the means which he had at his command.

Meanwhile the commander-in-chief ordered the troops to assemble in the camp beyond the Terek, whither I was also obliged to repair with Mr. S—'s tent, and to pitch it for him. This was on Easter-Sunday; so that I could not even go to church or enjoy myself after my fast. On Tuesday the troops commenced their march on the road that leads to Derbent. The passage of the river Kois was attended with

great difficulty; but after it was surmounted, our troops were allowed to recruit themselves at the town of Tarchu, whence we advanced, on the 1st of May, to Derbent, and pitched our camp near the hill opposite to the citadel, where the two principal Persian towers or batteries were situated. The spot lies very agreeably, and also very advantageously for a camp. We thence removed to the heights, where there was formerly a church-yard. After resting ourselves a little, the general sent a summons to Shah Ali Chan to surrender without effusion of blood, but the Chan instead of complying, used every exertion to strengthen the fortifications. Outside of the citadel and in the rear of the city, namely, there were thrown up works, called in Persian, *burdshi*, that is, batteries.

The first thing to be done was to storm these batteries. I was fond of being near the combatants that I might observe all that passed; and therefore sometimes left Mr. S—'s horses with the rest in the field, requesting the Cossacks on duty there to look after them. But, for my own security, I made my observations from the trenches, and took extraordinary delight in watching the bombs rising from our camp. This was to me a perfectly novel spectacle.

Prior to the arrival of Count Subow, the Cossack general, Saweljew, had been lying for some months with a small corps before Derbent; but on the appearance of so numerous an army as that commanded by the Count, the wealthy Armenians resident in Derbent, to the amount of about a hundred families, finding that the Russian proclamations would be followed up, secretly agreed together, in order to save themselves from destruction, to assist the Russian troops to take the city without effusion of blood. To this end they persuaded an adventurous Armenian, whom they let down at night by a rope from the citadel, to acquaint the Russians with its localities, that is to say, the points where it might be assailed with advantage, and also with the situation of the spring behind the fortress, which supplies the whole city with water, and without which the inhabitants could scarcely subsist a single day. This man reached the Russian camp in safety, was presented to the Count, and informed him, through an interpreter, of the cause of his mission.

By the Count's command the above-mentioned outer batteries were stormed on the 8th, as being an important point, overlooking the whole interior of the citadel. On the 9th the water of the spring was turned off, and the

Russians began to bombard the city, especially that part in which the house of the Chan was situated. The Persians had not entertained the least notion that they could be conquered, and had placed great reliance on the army which was to come from Dagistan to their relief. The loss of the *burdshi*, however, filled them with consternation. Against this place they drew up their only cannon of cast iron, which was silenced by the first lucky shot from our side. On the same day they also observed that their water was cut off. This misfortune operated still more effectually, and to avert farther calamities, they began to think of a voluntary surrender, which was immediately agreed upon by the Chan in a council of his chief officers, and he entrusted the business of negociating to the Armenians, under the idea that they, as Christians, would be able to obtain better terms from professors of the same religion. He chose therefore for his deputy Dadasch Stepan, the favourite of his sister and the most eminent of the Armenians, a very respectable man and already stricken in years; and gave him full powers to make such conditions as he thought fit. Dadasch Stepan came on the 10th of May to the camp, was introduced to the Count, and returned with the following, among other conditions:—1st, That the Chan should imme-

diately send forth the keys of the city, withdraw his troops from it, and repair in person to the Russian camp; and 2d, That all the inhabitants of the city should surrender their arms.

On receiving this answer, the Chan's principal officers came to the Russian camp to satisfy themselves of the correctness of the terms stated by Dadasch. On the 11th the keys of the city were first sent out, and they were followed by Shah Ali Chan, surrounded by his retinue. The generous conqueror went to meet him, received him with great respect, and said many flattering things to him. The Chan seemed at first to be panic-struck and trembled; but he was quite cheered again by this reception. The Count commanded the best tent there was to be erected for him, appointed him a guard of honour, and directed ample provision to be made for his subsistence. Mr. S— was appointed to be in constant attendance on him, with instructions to allow him every indulgence, but to take care that neither the Chan himself, nor the persons belonging to him, should hold private conversation with any individual. Separate tents were also allotted to those of his suite. In the day-time there was a grand parade with other ceremonies, and at night an illumination. A detachment of our

army entered the city the same day to occupy the principal points; but the main body, together with the commander-in-chief, continued in the camp. Not a soul was permitted to quit or enter the city without an order from Lieutenant-Colonel Möller-Sakomelskji. On the 12th the Chan's mother and sister came to the camp, and earnestly besought the Count to spare the Chan, and to forgive him on account of his youth for having presumed to oppose his arms. They too were very kindly received.

The more importance my master seemed to have acquired since his appointment about the person of the Chan, the more miserable was I; for, to say nothing of all the rest, I had no other food but black biscuit, and it cost me great trouble and violent threats to extort even that from Mr. S—'s *dentschik*. I fared the worse on account of my ignorance of the Russian language. One day, knowing that Dadasch was in Mr. S—'s tent, I went into it from curiosity, to hear what my master's suite were talking about. I found their heads as usual confused with the fumes of wine, and no sooner did I enter the tent than they all fell foul of me, asking how I durst presume to come where they were. Dadasch, who was a benevolent man, immediately took my part, told them that they abused me without cause, and

inquired from what place I was, and what I was doing with Mr. S—. I named my birthplace, and told him in what manner I had been recommended by a priest to my master, and what promises were held out to me by the latter. Dadasch hereupon desired me to call upon him, and quitted the tent, manifesting his contempt for the persons of the suite. Next day I went to Dadasch, and gave him a more circumstantial history of myself. He listened with sincere sympathy, expressed great pity for me, and advised me to quit Mr. S— and come to him; saying, that if I really possessed such talents, he would marry me to the eldest daughter of their old protopope, and make me a priest; and when the protopope died I should inherit all his property; in short, he would lay a firm foundation for my prosperity, and give me an engagement in writing to fulfil his promise. He added, that the whole congregation would be sure to approve the arrangement, because they were in great want of priests, and would be glad of scholars like myself. To me, however, it seemed wrong to quit Mr. S— with so little ceremony, and without asking his consent; I therefore told Dadasch, that as I had been placed with him by the priest, I could not leave him without some explanation. Dadasch was satisfied, and I spoke to Mr.

S—, as well respecting the ill-treatment I experienced from his suite, as the proposal of Dadasch.

Mr. S— shook his head, called me a simple inexperienced young fellow, pitied me on account of the narrowness of my views, and said: "How canst thou suffer thyself to be allured by a profession from which thou canst not hope to make more than five, or at the utmost, ten thousand rubles? Dadasch has given thee his word to act so towards thee that all shall be astonished; and it would be a disgrace to a man of my influence and consequence if I were not to keep my promise to thee, but to dismiss thee to a worse situation." In short he promised me such great things that I should be ashamed to write them down. Of the magnitude of his promises some conception may be formed from his speaking of five or ten thousand as a mere trifle scarcely worthy of notice. At the same time I was too well aware how little faith could be put in his words; but I had no notion that his solemn promises would prove but empty sounds, and that I should never obtain any thing through him, and therefore resolved to wait with patience. As to the insults of which I complained—"Who," said he sharply, "dares say unpleasant things to thee?" and in regard to my scanty supply of

food, he exclaimed: "What! notwithstanding my orders that thou shouldst have whatever thou needest!" With these words he hastily retired, as if to give directions immediately that I should be better supplied in future—but no alteration whatever took place in my condition.

On the 18th of May the troops broke up by command of the general, and marched through Derbent, by way of Kuba, for Schamach. In the seventeen days that the army had lain before Derbent, the health of the troops had greatly improved. The weather was agreeable, and the air pure and serene; there was abundance of spring-water and fresh herbs, and some fruit also. Provisions were plentiful: in short, there was no want of any thing; all were content and even merry, with the exception of one circumstance, which occasioned some disturbance, and which I will relate for the purpose of paying that honour to the zeal, fidelity, and vigilance of the Armenians of Derbent, which is justly due to them.

After the Russian troops had taken possession of Derbent, all was peace and quietness, when the principal Persians opened a correspondence with the troops expected from Dagistan, and it was agreed that they should suddenly attack the city when the Russians imagined themselves

in perfect security. In all probability such an attack would have been attended with most mischievous consequences, which were prevented by the Armenians, who gained intelligence of the plot, with which they immediately acquainted the general, having discovered the place where the conspirators met, and intercepted one of their letters. Twelve of the ringleaders were in consequence secured and carried off. Some other persons were apprehended, and the public tranquillity ensured: General Saweljew remained with some thousands of men in the fortress, while the rest of the army proceeded farther in admirable order and in the highest spirits. The Chan of Derbent was with the army, where for the rest he enjoyed perfect liberty. His suite strove to amuse him, and the evenings in particular were passed in great hilarity. He astonished the whole army by his skill in riding; his horse was extremely beautiful and uncommonly spirited. It scampered with the utmost ease up steep and apparently inaccessible hills, without seeming to communicate any unpleasant motion whatever to the rider. Some of his suite also had remarkably fine horses. We halted a week at the village of Mollachalyl; here the Chan of Kuba, who is dependent on the Chan of Derbent, came to the camp to signify his voluntary submission to

the commander-in-chief. He brought with him two exceedingly fine horses as a present for the Count, who accepted them, and dismissed him with many demonstrations of his favour. It may be with truth asserted, that the Chan had not expected such a degree of liberty and so many indulgences as he enjoyed through the kindness of the benevolent Count. Some Armenians from Muschkur, who accompanied the army as guides, warned the troops in good time not to turn out either the horses or other cattle to pasture, as many poisonous herbs grew in these parts for the space of some wersts; some of them being of so powerful a nature, that no sooner has an animal eaten of them than it drops down and expires. We had ocular demonstration of the truth of this statement. The army marched along the Caspian, so as to have that sea on the left and the Caucasian mountains on the right, proceeding very slowly on account of the intense heat. We went no more than twenty-five wersts at a stretch, and then rested one or perhaps two days. On the first of June we came to the river Samur, which descends from the mountains and discharges itself into the sea. Owing to the extreme impetuosity of the current, the passage was very difficult and not effected without loss. In spite of the utmost precaution, it was impossible to

prevent many suttlers' carts from being upset, and some of them driven with all the stores they contained into the sea. On the left of this river, towards the sea, is the district of Muschkur, comprehending about ten villages. The Armenians resident in it were in the sequel obliged, like many Armenians of Derbent, for fear of the revenge of the Persians, on account of the services rendered by them to the Russian troops, to abandon their flourishing gardens, their fertile fields, and all their immoveable property, and flee for refuge to Russia. They settled in the environs of Kislar, and still bear their former name. On the 7th of June we halted for some days at the village of Egrach. A few wersts farther, turning towards the mountains, at the distance of about five wersts, is the district or province of Guba. Just at the spot where the road turns on the left to Guba we halted, and afterwards pursued our route to the right towards Schamach, through a valley, which is at first very wide, and bordered on the left by the sea, but is afterwards bounded on either side by mountains. On this march the Chan of Derbent paraded as usual on his horse, turning sometimes to the right at others to the left, now down and then up hill, and sometimes going to a considerable distance. My master, as the guardian of so distinguished a

personage, was not a little proud of the Chan's agility. We had not yet reached the above-mentioned turning towards Schamach, when we passed a Persian village, situated so high up the mountain that we could scarcely see it: towards this village the Chan all at once dashed away at full speed. At first no suspicion was entertained: the Russians merely admired the agility of his horse, which ran up the steepest places like a hare; but it presently became evident that this was no amusement but a real flight. Cossacks were dispatched in pursuit, but their horses were not accustomed to hills; the Chan was soon out of sight, reached the village, and secreted himself. Such of his suite as could depend on their horses followed his example, and escaped the more easily, as no person noticed them, the eyes of all being intently fixed on the Chan.

It was manifest that Mr. S— had neglected his duty: he was puffed up with arrogance by which he rendered himself odious to the native Russian officers, his comrades, and at the same time he was enchanted with the show of respect paid him by the Chan and his suite, and so intoxicated with the titles they gave him, that the Chan was enabled to make all the requisite preparations for his flight. That his plan was not formed and executed on the spur of the

occasion, may be inferred, with the utmost probability, from the following circumstances. The Cossacks surrounded and searched the village: all at once three parties, of three each, rode off on three different sides, and each of these nine took a different direction. The Cossacks knew not which to pursue in preference, for neither the Chan's horse nor his dress was to be seen among them. They followed therefore at random. The Cossacks were more successful than could well have been expected, considering the extraordinary swiftness of the Persian horses; for they took and brought in two parties, that is, six men, but the third they were unable to overtake, and one of this lucky trio must have been the Chan

Mr. S— was immediately ordered under arrest; seals were put on his effects, and a sentinel placed over him to take care that he should speak nothing but Russian, and even to report daily what he said in that language. His horses were taken away, and I was of course at liberty. It was originally intended that the army should this day advance to the spring of Gurt-Bulag; the general, however, gave orders that the troops should proceed no farther but seek the Chan. Their search was to no purpose.

Mr. S— had hitherto been accustomed on

the march, as soon as we approached a town or village, to send out his tipsy attendants to fetch whatever he wanted, such as wine, wheat, bread, and other necessaries, and fodder for his horses, desiring them to give out that he was a man of great authority, and that the Chan was completely at his disposal. Both Persians and Armenians accordingly took him for what he pretended to be, and supplied him with all he demanded. His messengers of course took good care of themselves; they were every where well entertained, lived in abundance, and were almost always intoxicated.

In such a state of things the hopes held out to them could not be said to be wholly disappointed, while I, miserable wretch! had not a moment's rest, and was nearly famished. As soon as Mr. S— was arrested they immediately forsook him, and one went this way, the other that. I, on the contrary, seeing him deserted by all, forgot the ill-usage I had experienced, and in obedience to the Christian precept to return evil with good, I determined to stand by him till he should be set at liberty or brought to trial. I went therefore to him, and through the medium of an interpreter, assured him of my pity for his misfortune, and my readiness to serve him, at the same time frankly

acknowledging the reason why I was dissatisfied with him, and adding that I should forget it merely on account of his unfortunate situation.

Mr. S— was amazed and affected by my conduct; he declared that he was sorry he had not known me better before, and that he repented the injustice he had done me; and assured me that when he got over his present misfortune, he would share the last morsel of bread with me, if it were not in his power to do any thing more for me. The clothes which I bought at Kislar were quite worn out: Mr. S— gave me a sheep-skin *tulup*, which he took from his attendant. He might, perhaps, have found something else for me; but he dressed me in a pelisse, probably calculating that, as the weather was then so hot, I should but seldom use it.—We stopped two days at the same spot to seek the Chan; but towards evening on the third or fourth day we ascended the hill, and halted near Gurt-Bulag. I was strictly watched and durst not write to Mr. S—, nor even say any thing to him but what related to indispensably necessary matters, and that only through the medium of a translator. For his subsistence, for mine and that of a lad whom he kept, he gave me a ruble a week; but in delivering to me this pittance his hand shook, and his naturally niggardly disposition was but too apparent.

This ruble was of course quite inadequate to our support; but I went every day to the Armenians who followed the army, and begged bread, wine, cheese, wheat, and other things of them. Besides this, many of the officers of the army employed me to make fishing-rods for them, for which they paid me a good price. In this manner I procured sufficient, not for myself only, but also for the subsistence of Mr. S— and his lad.

Many staff and superior officers who were displeased with his conduct, and especially the other two interpreters, who witnessed my truly disinterested zeal and attention to him, repeatedly advised me to consult my own safety and advantage, and warned me that I should myself be ruined if I continued any longer with him. Some of them indeed offered to take me into their service at a salary of twenty rubles per month, chiefly as I suspect to deprive Mr. S— of his last stay and support. To me, at any rate, they always predicted that S— would eventually repay my attachment with the blackest ingratitude. I resolutely replied, that I would not quit him because he had been forsaken by all, even by his own countrymen; that I expected the reward of my conduct from God alone, who has commanded us to love our enemies and to bless them that curse us;

whereas the very heathen could love their friends, and do good for those from whom they received kindness.

While we were encamped at Gurt-Bulag, a wealthy Armenian arrived as envoy from the Zar of Grusia to the general. He was a native of Signach, and the object of his mission was, as I heard, to solicit assistance from the Count for the Zar Heraklios, who purposed to march to Handshu against the Persians, to avenge the destruction of his kingdom and the death of so many of his subjects. I was curious to see this messenger, and therefore sought to meet with him, in which I succeeded on the fourth day. I did not know him, nor did I think I had ever seen him; but he recognised me at the first glance. "Ha! my friend," cried he, "art thou here?" He then asked how I came to the Russian army, and how it happened that I was so poor and in such a ragged plight. I related to him in a few words how I had got to Kislar and into the service of Mr. S—, with whose history he was already well acquainted. "Thou hast fallen into bad hands," said he; and then told me how grieved the doctor had been and all the inhabitants of Signach with him: the latter and himself among the rest always supposed that I had secretly run away. "All of us," said he, "considered it as certain that thou

wouldst be our priest; the doctor ardently desired to have thee for his son, and would have given thee his daughter and his whole fortune. Why dost thou here submit to such wretchedness, living with a man for whom thou hast suffered and yet endurest so much, besides, as I am told, collecting alms for him and supporting him? Be persuaded to return to Signach. I will supply all thy wants, and pay whatever debts thou mayst owe. Our congregation will receive thee with joy, and reimburse all thy expenses trebly and fourfold. Thou wilt be immediately acknowledged as the eldest priest. Ever since thou exposedst the blunders of our priests they have been at variance with one another, and thereby occasion great scandal to their flock. We know how conversant thou art with the church-service, and are certain that thou wouldst correct all irregularities and set a good example, as was demonstrated by thy behaviour whilst thou livedst with the doctor, and still more by thy kindness to the young man from Erivan, of which Matheos informed us after thy departure, and which strengthened our conviction, that in thee we should have a most exemplary pastor. If thou wilt consent to go to Signach, I can assure thee of the gratitude of the whole congregation there, and will immediately provide every thing necessary for thy departure. If, on the contrary, thou continuest

with thy present master, thou canst not expect to prosper, for his guilt as every body knows is so great that his ruin seems inevitable, and I am afraid that unless thou quittest him, the consequences may be extremely injurious to thee: I therefore advise thee, withdraw thyself while it is yet time, lest, as the Scripture says, the last evil be worse than the first. With us thou mayst live in peace, happiness, and respect."—"Sir," replied I, "from my early infancy to this day I have had to endure all possible trials, as is in part not unknown to you; I am therefore already habituated to struggle with misfortune and want. I bear with patience all my afflictions, and hope that God will earlier or later look down upon me in mercy, and be gracious to me and deliver me from my tribulations. I am duly sensible of the value of what you offer me, not according to my worthiness but out of pure compassion. I have, however, vowed in my heart to God not to forsake my unfortunate master, who is deserted by all and has no other solace than my attentions. If I now recall my word I shall aggravate his distress; I will rather obey the precepts of the Gospel, and desire no other happiness than that which it promises in a future life: but if I abandon the unfortunate man I lose every thing, and while I save my body I plunge my soul into perdition. If you

are really desirous to establish my temporal welfare, I humbly entreat you to wait till Mr. S— shall be set at liberty. God will perhaps deliver him out of the misery in which he is at present involved; then I shall be free from my promise and may leave him with a good conscience." Hereupon I requested him to send me for my farther assurance on his return home, a written confirmation of what he had promised me from the whole congregation; and begged that, out of pity to my master, he would not acquaint any person with this conversation, which would naturally grieve him profoundly, and inflict fresh wounds in addition to those which he had already received. Lastly, I assured him that as soon as I was at liberty, I would most cheerfully comply with the wishes of the congregation, and set out immediately for Signach. When I begged him to spare my master, I was so affected by his situation that I could not repress my tears. The envoy was not best pleased with my answer, but promised to comply with all I desired, merely cautioning me not to deceive him. At parting he gave me, because I was barefoot, two rubles in Grusian silver coin, to buy myself shoes and stockings. My situation, however, grew daily worse and worse. Every morning before sun-rise, I went to a spring a werst from the camp, in order that,

oppressed with grief, I might there pour forth my heart to God. While I was once thus engaged and shedding abundance of tears, I turned my eyes to the sun which was just then rising. The whole horizon was covered as it were with bloody clouds. In these clouds my eyes, confused with weeping or with deep distress on account of my wretched situation, discerned many human heads and figures of men going from them to the sun and returning to them. These appearances filled me with such terror, that I turned my face to the ground and soon lost all recollection. In this state I lay above an hour, when our Calmucks came to the spot to water their camels and roused me. The sun was already pretty high, and I know not whether I was asleep or insensible during the interval. I took good care to conceal this circumstance as well as all my sorrows from my master, that I might not aggravate his distress.

The army remained about six weeks at Gurt-Bulach. The grass there was so completely fed off, that it was necessary to drive the horses above twelve wersts to pasture, which could not be done without danger on account of the mountain-banditti. The troops therefore marched towards the end of July from Gurt-Bulach to the spacious valley of Perseida, near Old-Schamach, close to the foot of the Caucasian

mountains. The air at Gurt-Bulach was very agreeable and salubrious, but at Perseida we found it dry and scorching. The march too was very fatiguing, for there was only one steep rocky road that led down to Perseida. The inhabitants of Old Schamach had been obliged by the frequent incursions of the mountain-robbers to remove to another place, which was called New Schamach, or Ach-su, white water, after the river there. Fifteen or twenty wersts from Old Schamach, on the top of a hill, is to be seen the strong and almost inaccessible place, Fit-Daga, to which, for a considerable distance there is but a very narrow road. Here, in times of trouble and danger, the inhabitants of New Schamach and of the whole district seek refuge. Thus, on the invasion of Grusia by Aga Mahomet Chan, the Chan of Schamach would not submit to him, and retired with all his people to Fit-Daga. The hills here about were generally covered with grazing herds and flocks, and hence presented a very pleasing sight. The army was here overtaken by the Armenian bishop of Russia, and the late ambassador from the Zar Heraklios at St. Petersburg. The commander-in-chief received them with great respect. The bishop was sent to Mustapha, Chan of Schamach, to invite him to come to the Russian camp, not as to enemies, but by way of demon-

strating his friendship. They rode to the village of Sagian, situated on a hill only a few wersts from Perseida. In the Armenian convent there the bishop affirmed with an oath to the Chan that he would be received as a friend, and would afterwards be at liberty to return home. The general accordingly received him with great respect, and assured him that the Russians would conduct themselves as friends in his territories. The Chan on his part declared, that he had expected and even wished for the arrival of the Russians, and solicited the protection and assistance of the Count against the Shah, whom he regarded as his enemy. After the departure of the Chan, the bishop and the ambassador resolved to solicit of the Count the pardon of Mr. S——. They hoped thereby to distinguish themselves, and to remove the disgrace reflected on their nation by the state to which one of its members was reduced. Be this as it may, confidently as both could rely on the Count's favour towards them, still they knew the heinousness of S——'s offence, in violation of his duty and his oath, and therefore did not venture to intercede for him, till they had prevailed on the Chan of Schamach to join them. The Chan complied, and on his part wrote a very urgent letter to the Count. The latter was disposed to oblige them, because they had it in their power

to be of service to him: he therefore ordered S— to be brought before him, and in the presence of his intercessors and many officers of the army, a paper was read detailing the charges against him, the evidences of his guilt, and the heavy punishment to which he had rendered himself liable. He then pronounced his pardon, and ordered his sword and all his effects to be restored to him. No sooner was Mr. S— at liberty than, instead of proving himself deserving of this lenity, and making amends for his past faults, he recommenced his old trade. To such of the Armenians as were not yet acquainted with him, some of the Persians, and other simple people, he talked very big, and boasted that "they were obliged to acquit him." By this time I understood a good deal of what was said in Russian; nay, upon occasion, I could even make myself intelligible in it. As I had heard much that was said about him; and had, particularly during his arrest, acquired a thorough insight into his case, I was exceedingly astonished at this speedy revival of his boasting disposition, and also that he acknowledged neither the mercy of God nor the clemency of the Count. For the rest, I was greatly rejoiced at his liberation, for I now considered myself as being at liberty to take advantage of the first favourable chance; and in the mean

time I resolved to watch him attentively. Caught by his high-sounding speeches, many Armenians came to him, each with his particular application, and he promised to satisfy them all. Our tent was therefore constantly thronged with persons soliciting appointments, and they frequently begged me to remind S— of their business. Though I was well aware that my master was deceiving them, I was curious to know what he would say on the subject, but received a severe reprimand for presuming to interfere in his affairs.

About this time S— learned that the Count intended to send an envoy to the Chans of Handshu and Schuscha, to propose to them to acknowledge themselves Russian subjects. He did not fail to profit by this circumstance, and begged the archbishop to solicit the Count to entrust him with this commission; promising in return to speak of the archbishop to the Armenians there, in such terms that they would certainly be induced to come and pay their respects to him. The archbishop complied, and employed his influence with such success, that the mission to the two Chans was given to S—. He was certainly a very suitable person for this duty, as he was perfectly well acquainted with the character of the Persians. The commander-in-chief had, moreover, good reason to

hope that the pardon granted to S— would operate with him as a motive to exert himself to the utmost, in order to repay in some measure this important obligation.

At his departure I was left behind, according to his usual custom, without provisions or resources. Soon afterwards I received, by an inhabitant of Tiflis, letters from the above-mentioned Armenian of Signach and Dr. Matheos. The former wrote to me that every thing relative to my business was arranged according to my wish, and advised me to repair as early as possible to Signach. Dr. Matheos assured me in the most affectionate terms of his love and his concern for my then situation, adding that, according to the report current there, the major with whom I was had been convicted of a heinous offence, and that I could not continue any longer in the service of such a man without incurring danger, or at least suspicion: he therefore, exhorted me to come to him as speedily as possible, when he would receive me as his own son, and I might take up money on his account to defray my travelling expenses; if I had any debts he would pay them, whatever might be their amount, and I might shew this letter as a document. Dr. Matheos was in fact so well known that, on producing his letter, I might easily have obtained

of the Armenians of Tiflis as much money as I had occasion for. But, soon after S—'s departure, a circumstance occurred which prevented me from stirring in the business, and even from answering the letter.

Chan Nuralji, a young man of twenty, descended, as he said, from the legitimate sovereigns of Persia, fled in disgust from that country to Russia, and resided at Kislar. The commander-in-chief, feeling for his situation, took him along with him. The Chan always called him father, and manifested a truly filial attachment to the Count. He had a sufficient establishment with an adequate allowance, and it was moreover well known that the Count intended to appoint him Cham of some place or other. He passed his evenings very merrily: Persian singing girls with very agreeable voices sang songs of gaiety and love, one of which in particular became so popular that it was to be heard throughout the whole army, for many had learned it by heart. All day he did nothing but play and ride: in short his life was one round of pleasure. To him were given the effects left behind by the Chan of Derbent at the period of his flight. Not only the Count but every one else considered his fidelity as secured, and after the favours conferred on him they were an-

thorized to cherish this confidence. Indeed it may be with truth asserted, that the Persians are kind and grateful, but only in their own place, or where they possess the authority, not while living under a foreign power, but under their own laws—otherwise no reliance can be placed on their good faith. Thus too, Chan Nuralji, regardless of all the kindness shown him, only watched for a favourable opportunity to exchange his situation, which he knew from experience to be so comfortable, for another with which he was totally unacquainted. The plan which he had devised for this purpose, was probably in his opinion a very brilliant one; it aimed not only at the life of his benefactor, but at the annihilation of the whole army, which he thought to destroy in cutting off its commander. The first step he took towards its execution was, to assemble a suite of more than a hundred persons, under pretext of wanting more men who understood the management of camels and horses, as practised in his own country. At the same time he kept up a constant intercourse with Mustapha, Chan of Schamach, who paid him frequent visits. Some state, that one of Nuralji's retinue was intercepted with a letter addressed to the Chan of Schamach; while others relate, with greater

probability, that Nuralji in riding a race dropped his cap, which was picked up by a Russian officer placed about him as interpreter: the latter, perceiving in it a letter folded in the Persian manner, slipped it into his pocket, and afterwards delivered a translation of it to the Count. In this letter Nuralji fixed the day and hour when Mustapha was to attack the head-quarters in the camp; assuring him that he would be ready with his bravest fellows to make a dash at the same point, and when they had thus got rid of the general all the rest would be very easily accomplished.

Be this as it may, the tent of Chan Nuralji was silently surrounded at night by armed men, and the Chan loaded with fetters. The persons of his suite were likewise secured, and in the possession of almost all of them was found a quantity of arms which they ought not to have had. Among their effects were my letters from Signach, to which I could now return only a verbal answer by the man who brought them; for I should otherwise have run great risk of incurring suspicion. As soon as the Chan of Schamach was apprized of the fate of his accomplices, he abandoned his residence and fled.

The army was meanwhile in a very unpleasant situation. The extreme heat and the free use of fruit produced many diseases. The

introduction of fruit was restricted, and sentries stationed to enforce this arrangement. Horses, camels, and bullocks, died chiefly for want of fodder, for the grass was either eaten or burned up, and was also hurtful on account of the many sulphureous particles which it imbibed from the ground; and at last came stormy weather with much rain. The Count, therefore, ordered the troops to break up without delay for Schamach, which was only fifteen wersts distant; but this march was extremely fatiguing from the want of horses, camels, and oxen, to carry the baggage.

Hassim Chan, the uncle of Chan Mustapha, a man already far advanced in years, had, from mistrust of his nephew, been long resident with the Chan of Schaka. As soon as he heard of Mustapha's flight, he had repaired to Schamach and taken his place. The old man came out to meet the army, proposed to become a Russian subject, and himself conducted the commander-in-chief into the fortress. The Count was much pleased with his conduct, and saluted him as the actual ruler of Schamach, on which the Chan took the oath of allegiance in presence of the whole army. Gold and silver coin were handed to him on a silver dish, and other valuable presents were added. Salutes of small-arms and artillery were fired, and the children

hallooed all day long, according to custom: "Hassim Chan is our sovereign!" At night the town and camp were illuminated.

From this place the commander-in-chief sent a detachment of his troops, under General Bulgakow, to the assistance of the Zar Heraklios, who, as I have observed, was anxious to revenge the invasion of his country. He first joined the Chan of Handshu, who had acted as guide to the Zar, and with his troops formed his advanced guard. The archbishop and the ambassador of Heraklios accompanied these troops.

Just as they were marching off my master returned from his mission, enriched with various presents. I immediately remonstrated with him on his ill-treatment in again leaving me unprovided for, and then shewed him the letters from Signach, though they mentioned him in not the most flattering terms. The Armenians of Muschkur attested the genuineness of these letters, and praised the magnanimity with which, at the time of his arrest, I had refused such advantageous offers. Major S— immediately assumed the look which he always had ready for such occasions, and signified that I had again fallen into a mistake, for which he sincerely pitied me. He then repeated once more the whole catalogue of his promises, and

advised me, in a tone that seemed to express real sympathy and a truly excellent disposition, nay, he besought me, to wait till we should get to Russia. This simple argument served to disarm me more than all the rest, and I was again induced to relinquish my intention of returning to Signach, and to remain with S—.

At Schamach, or Ach-su, also, our troops suffered not a little. The frequent rains had rendered the ground here, which is clayey, so soft and slippery, that we could scarcely keep on our legs, and the scarcity of provisions put us to still greater inconvenience. The general, therefore, resolved to seek better quarters for the winter, and ordered the army to advance to Mugano-Tschol, or the *steppe* of Mugan, after we had lain about three weeks at Ach-su. This was in the month of September.

At our departure Hassim Chan renewed his oath of allegiance, and the Count certainly had no reason to suppose that this old man, whom he had loaded with favours, would detach himself from him at a time when he could look to no other than the Count for the confirmation of his authority. Mugano-Tschol lies south-east of New Schamach. Our march lasted three days. At some distance from Schamach we came to the river Kur, which falls into the Caspian Sea. The army was much incom-

moded by the clayey soil, but on the other hand was greatly refreshed by the abundance of pomegranates growing on the bank of the Kur. Whole herds of deer also frequently passed in sight of the army, but the horses were too much fatigued to pursue them. The army halted and encamped on a spacious and pleasant plain near the Kur. The Cossack regiments, under the command of General Platow, crossed the river to Mugano-Tschol, whither all the horses and the cattle in general were likewise conveyed. The troops in a short time erected for their beloved commander as handsome a wooden house of two floors as the governors of any of the provinces of Persia had to reside in.

Throughout all Persia there is not so extensive a *steppe* as that of Mugan: but the army could not have tarried there at any other than this very season of the year, for it was completely clothed with the most beautiful herbage, which was rendered the more salubrious by the saline particles communicated to it by the soil, which abounds in nitre, and which imbibes the snow as fast as it falls. From spring till the beginning of autumn this plain is the abode, I may say the domain, of innumerable serpents and other venomous reptiles of various kinds. The air is then heavy and almost suffocating, so

that it is utterly impossible to live in it for any length of time; and the buzzing of insects and the hissing of serpents may be heard at a great distance: in short, during the whole of the spring and summer no human being nor even any domestic animal can approach this spot. The troops dug holes in the ground for winter habitations, and turned up a great number of snakes, some of which were twelve *werschok* in circumference. Provisions, wine, and also ammunition, were brought to the army in flat-bottomed boats, called *kiradshi;* and the river Kur furnished them with abundance of fish, as sturgeon, and other varieties of the accipenser genus, as the *sewruga* and the red-fish *(gasel-balyk)*, which consists almost entirely of a palatable fat, that is used not only for food but for the purpose of illumination throughout all Persia. It was chiefly the Cossacks and some of the suttlers who employed themselves in catching these fish. A Persian dish, consisting of boiled fish with pounded filberts and the juice of unripe pomegranates or citrons, which is called in Persian *fissen-shan*, was a great favourite in the camp. The troops were also supplied with abundance of Turkey corn, with which they made a kind of pudding, and ate with it the above-mentioned fat of the *gasel-balyk* instead of butter. A better situation than

this spot for our camp could not have been selected. The men, who were before quite exhausted, here recovered their strength and spirits, and had in perfect security abundance of provisions and leisure to amuse themselves.

The Chan of Talischa, the Sultan of Salian, and some of the most distinguished Persians of the province of Gilan, as likewise the relatives of those princes, had at first, according to the custom of the Persians, secreted themselves from the Russians: but when they heard of the courtesy and liberality of the Count, they repaired to him to signify their submission, and many of them even declared their readiness to take up arms against the professors of their own religion, either because they knew that no hostilities would take place during the winter, and that they should find opportunities before spring of acting inimically under the mask of friendship, or with the intention of going over again to their countrymen, as those who had no possessions might very easily do. The general, nevertheless, received them all with his accustomed generosity, and made suitable presents to each, under the idea that at least some of them might continue faithful and render him service.

About this time Murtasa-Guli-Chan, formerly ruler of the province of Gilan, came from Petersburg, after a long residence in that city,

whither he had fled from the tyranny of his own brother, Aga-Mahomet-Chan, who had put to death his mother, and threatened to boil him alive. He was sent to the army for the purpose of being reinstated in his dominions. In consequence of this the commander-in-chief caused it to be proclaimed in several towns of Persia, that in the beginning of spring hostilities would commence. Many Armenians and some Persians also, who were deemed trust-worthy, were employed as spies to sound the temper and sentiments of the Persians. It was, moreover, well known that the Russian army could penetrate almost without impediment into Persia, on whatever side it pleased, if adequate provision could be made for the subsistence of the troops. To say nothing of the governors of provinces, the Shah, himself could not raise a sufficient force to withstand the Russian army, especially as the Persians have, or at least then had, no artillery, and dread its effect. The reduction of Derbent, which is considered as the key to Persia, and is also called the Iron Gate, had of itself thrown them into the greatest consternation; for they have an ancient tradition, that whenever armed Christians should enter at the iron gate the destruction of the Musulman race was near at hand. Many landed proprietors, therefore, sold their possessions, and removed

towards Scham, that is Damask. For this time, however, they were quit with the fright. The intelligence of the decease of the Empress Catherine the Second put a stop to all hostilities; the oath of allegiance was taken with much solemnity to the Emperor Paul the First, and on the 6th—17th of January, 1797, his accession was celebrated with great ceremony. The whole army was drawn up in parade, and the consecration of the water was succeeded by so tremendous a discharge from the great guns, that the Persians and Armenians, who had never heard such a thundering noise, were ready to sink with astonishment and terror.

In the course of the two following months the Sultan of Salian, the Chan of Talischa, and many others, quitted the camp under various pretexts, returned home, and spread a report that the Russian troops would soon evacuate Persia. Many persons were induced by this rumour to consider themselves at liberty to rob and murder on the highways. Even old Hassim Chan of Schamach, forgetting the kindness of the Count, entered into conspiracies, and committed depredations. Foreseeing that if the Russian troops were to withdraw, his nephew would return to resume his authority, and he himself be obliged to flee, he levied large contributions from the wealthy inhabitants of

Schamach, or rather he plundered them with a view to amass money.

Before the departure of the army from Mugan - Tschol the following circumstance occurred. The Sultan of Salian had promised Mr. S—— a boy and a girl from among the Grusian captives, because he had obtained him presents from the Count ; and I was dispatched with a Cossack in a *kibitka* to receive them. He also commissioned me to inquire at Salian what the Persians thought and said concerning our army. With his usual stinginess he did not give us a single *copeck*, assuring us that we should every where be supplied with all we wanted, the moment we mentioned to whom we belonged. We found by the way many dead bodies of Persians, and were not an instant safe either from the Persians or the mountain-banditti.

Salian is situated on the Caspian Sea. We proceeded along the banks of the Kur, concealed ourselves two nights in the woods, and on the third came to the ferry. The Persian who ferried us across the river demanded payment: we told him we had no money, but were going to the Sultan, on which he heartily abused us and him who had sent us. The Sultan too was not disposed to pay much regard to our mission. Upon pretext that he was engaged in

portioning his daughter, whom he was about to marry to the Chan of Talischa, he declined seeing us, but favoured us so far as to assign us quarters, through the medium of one of his officers, with a Persian of the family of Salianlu, who had to furnish ourselves and the horse with every necessary. This Persian was very poor, and not at all pleased with our visit. During the three weeks and upwards that we were obliged to wait for the Sultan's answer, he was incessantly grumbling about the trouble and expense that we occasioned him. It was only from his tone and gestures that my Cossack inferred his sentiments towards us; but I, understanding his language, was aware of the full extent of his animosity, and sensible of the necessity of caution, lest we should pay for it with our lives. I bore every thing therefore with patience, and advised my companion to do all that lay in his power to please the Persian, and take no notice of his anger. To get out of his sight we passed whole days in fishing, for which a weir of poles is alone employed. The Kur at this place abounds to such a degree with surgeon, and other varieties of the same genus, that you may catch them with your hands, and take them out of the water as out of a tub. Besides supplying profusely the whole adjacent country, numerous vessels from the Caspian Sea

are freighted with them; and after all, so great is the superfluity, that the roe alone is taken out of many of them, and they are then thrown back into the water. I did not forget my master's commission, and took particular notice what was said concerning our army, but found only one tale upon every tongue, namely, that we should soon return home.

Most of the houses of Salian are built of reeds plastered with clay, and very few of brick. I was much struck here with the cows of Talischa: they are very large, somewhat like the Dutch cattle, and have on the shoulders a hump half an *arschine* in height, such as the camels have on their backs. I was informed that at Talischa itself this hump grows to twice the size. This species of cows is not met with elsewhere; and it is singular, that though Salian is not far from Talischa, yet, as I was told, when cows are brought from the latter to the former place, this hump immediately diminishes. For the rest it is well known that many animals of this breed have been exported to Astrachan and other parts, but that in all of them the hump gradually decreases, and is totally wanting in the next generation.

Our host gave us no bread but only fish fried in the fat of the *gasel-balyk*. As I never saw any bread at all, I once asked him why he gave

us no bread, and he replied, that it was not eaten there. Wishing to ascertain this point, I asked many aged Persians, but they all assured me, and some of them with an oath, that they had certainly seen people belonging to other nations eat bread, but neither they, nor their fathers, nor their grand-fathers, had ever used any: that their principal food consisted of pulse or corn, (probably Turkey,) but that bread was so much disliked by them that, in order to deter a child from doing any thing improper, the first threat employed was, that they would give him bread to eat.

While I was thus making inquiries concerning every thing that struck me at Salian, I took notice that I was closely watched, and at last observed that I was followed by a Persian wherever I went. The Sultan neither admitted us to his presence, nor returned any answer. My Cossack too perceived the impending danger. At the end of the second week in Lent I perceived a great number of Armenians, or rather whole villages of them, at no great distance from Salian, coming down the river in boats from the island of Ansal, in the province of Gilan, where an inconsiderable Russian corps was stationed. As they had shown kindness and friendship to the latter, they were apprehensive of the vengeance of the Persians after the departure of the corps:

they were therefore going to the main army at Mugana-Tschol, intending to proceed with it to Baku, and hence to Russia. I now resolved to lose no time, but to apply to Major W——n, who, according to a treaty concluded with the Sultan, had been sent to Salian as a kind of consul, to procure provisions for the army on the river Kur, and to purchase fish of Russian merchants who had come hither from Astrachan. I went to him with my Cossack one evening after dark, to escape observation. At some distance from his quarters we saw several Persians lurking about, and suspected that they were waiting for somebody. Our danger was too obvious; but Major W—— was this evening more agreeably engaged, and would not see us, notwitstanding our representationsthat our destruction would be inevitable. A Rusian servant of his, from Astrachan, told me, in Persian, that his master was in the most imminent danger on account of a love intrigue, but did not concern himself in the least about it. We were obliged to wait till the following evening. The whispering and movements of our host and his people clearly discovered to us that our fears were likely to be soon realized; but W—— could not see us this evening for the same reason as before. On the third day his servant again said that he durst not announce us, and gave us hopes for the next;

but I resolutely insisted, that the consul should come out to us: the Cossack too lost all patience, and began without ceremony to say every thing against him that despair could suggest, so that this time the consul could not get rid of us. He ordered me to be admitted alone: I represented to him our situation, and besought him to employ his influence for our deliverance, or at least in behalf of the Cossack, who, owing to his dress and his ignorance of the Persian language, was exposed to the most danger. The Major, in fact, paid no attention to me, went several times while I was speaking into the next room, where he probably had a more agreeable object to engage him than the rescue of two unfortunate men, and the performance of his duty. At last he said: "Well, now go home; I will try what I can do," and with these words he left me: hence it was evident to me that no reliance was to be placed upon him. In the most painful anxiety the Cossack and I returned home, and the last two nights we durst not close our eyes for fear lest in our sleep we should be put to rest for ever. I had already written more than once to Mr. S— by trusty persons, but in answer he only desired me to make haste to get the boy and girl into my possession, and to say every where that I was his servant. As then I could devise no other means of escape, I determined to

have recourse to stratagem. Next morning I left my quarters as usual, but soon returned, and told my host, as if in a violent hurry, that I had received from my master a letter for the Sultan begged him to go with me to the latter, and added, that our army had set out for Salian. I then took an Armenian letter of Mr. S—'s, as though I had just received it at the river, said that Mr. S— presented his respects to the Sultan, and requested that quarters might be provided for him as the troops were already advancing towards Salian. The Sultan replied, that whatever was requisite should be got ready, and desired me to hasten back, for Mr. S— might want me as well as the carriage. Apprehensive of being outwitted, and to avoid all suspicion, I asserted that Mr. S— could very well dispense with me, and that, by his permission, I would wait for him there. The Sultan was really frightened, and that he might not betray his evil designs he sent us off that very hour. As soon as we had crossed the river we drove our horse unmercifully, and made such haste as to reach the army in the evening. I gave Mr. S— an account of our first reception by the Sultan, of our fears, and of Major W—'s conduct; but S— was firmly of opinion, that I had never mentioned his name, and that this was the cause of all our difficulties and dangers.

I was therefore necessitated to confess frankly how little respect had been paid to his name by all, not even excepting the ferryman of the Kur.

I found him in a very ill humour; for, in the first place, in consequence of the departure of the Persians of distinction from our camp, his income from that quarter had ceased; and, in the next, his brother from Astrachan, a very old and respectable man, had, to his great mortification, come to him, having heard of the consequence of the Major, whom he had brought up, and hoping to obtain succour from him. The poor old man, however, was terribly disappointed. He had once been very rich, but was now reduced to indigence through the kindness of his servants. His brother too had contributed to impoverish him; for he had been sent by him with 8,000 rubles to the city of Andrea, in Dagistan, to purchase silk and other commodities, but had staid at Kislar six months, squandered the money, and, as he durst not return, had entered into the Russian service, in which he had been fortunate enough to obtain rapid promotion. His brother, who was anxious enough to see him after a separation of so many years, had brought with him some effects, such as the remnant of his silver plate, a quantity of tobacco, &c. which he hoped with his brother's assistance to dispose of to advantage, and thereby improve

his circumstances; but S— refused him even a morsel of bread: neither did he stop there. The old man was very meanly dressed: if any one hinted at his poverty to S—, the latter would protest that he had settled an annuity of a thousand rubles on his brother, but that he was a drunkard for whom it was impossible to do any good. This calumny wounded the old man to the quick; for many, who knew no better, would have nothing more to say to him, or even reproached him with his conduct, and thus he complained to me, that he had hitherto tried to bear all his misfortunes, but this treatment of his brother would certainly break his heart. It is not unlikely that serious consequences might have ensued, had not the march to Baku intervened. As soon as orders were issued to this effect, Mr. S— thought fit to send me forward thither with one of his *denstchiks*,* and a cart chiefly laden with property which he had amassed. I asked for money or provisions for the journey, and he again told me I need only say that I belonged to Andrei Bogdanowitsch. I reminded him, however, of the hunger and the reproach I had already endured on account of his name, when there was no money to back it; but for

* *Denstschiks* are soldiers appointed to attend officers, but who are paid and fed by the State.—*Translator.*

this just remonstrance he was ready to beat me: he forbade me to say another word on the subject, and referred me for my subsistence to his *denstschik*, to whom he gave nothing either. The first day of our journey passed off tolerably well; at night we stopped at a *caravansarai*, where we found eight travelling merchants. My companion began to eat of his loaf, and I would have helped him, but he bluntly told me that he could not share it with me because he had not enough for himself; that his bread was given him by the State, since he was in the service of the Emperor, for whom alone he underwent all hardships, without desiring more than what his profession afforded him, and therefore no one could take away what was allowed him by the sovereign; but that the Major who employed me was bound to support me out of his own pocket, without encroaching on the scanty pittance of a poor soldier, and starving him to death. I saw clearly that the good *denstschik* possessed more philosophy than bread, and acknowledged the perfect justice and cogency of his arguments. We stopped the next night at a large *caravansarai* of two stories, provided with all the requisite accommodations for travelling merchants,* and so constructed that

* It is still the benevolent practice in Asia for opulent persons either to build *caravansarais* by the road side, or to dig

the inmates might defend themselves as in a fortress from the attacks of robbers. Here also we met with some travellers of whom I begged bread and cheese, upon promise to pray for their deceased relatives, and which I shared with my companion, whose stock was already quite exhausted. Next morning we had not proceeded above two wersts when the road began to be very soft and muddy. Our horses, which had scarcely seen any fodder, advanced with great difficulty, and one of them actually fell down. The mire at the same time clung to the wheels, so that after a few turns they were completely encumbered with it. At every step, therefore, we were obliged the one to clear them and the other to help to pull. By noon we were so fatigued that both of us began to weep.* Thick naphtha vapour issuing from the earth, wind from the sea, and rain, combined to aggravate

wells, or erect bridges, according as the place has most need of one or the other, and that without any view to profit.

Author.

* Whether this weakness be common to the Armenians or not I cannot tell; but the Russians of the lower class are easily moved to tears. I have seen instances when the same man, whose tears on meeting with any difficulty it was very hard to stop, has fallen to work immediately afterwards, with indefatigable industry and the utmost cheerfulness, on being shown how to surmount it.—*Translator.*

our situation. Fortunately for us we were overtaken by Persian merchants, who, at my urgent request, assisted our horses to draw the cart to a spot from which the road was covered with reeds and brush-wood, and showed us a village where we might find a night's lodging. Some notion may be formed of the heaviness of the road when I state that it took us almost the whole day to go four wersts. Towards evening we arrived at the village just alluded to, where we sought about till at length we found some hay mixed with straw for our horses. The inhabitants had all fled on hearing the report of the approach of the troops, and we were the only persons who lodged there that night. We passed the next day at this place to rest our horses. The country is mountainous, and in winter very dangerous; for, after a fall of snow, travellers who are not perfectly well acquainted with the road are liable to fall into deep pits, and to be buried under the snow. I myself saw there the corpses of several unfortunate persons who had perished in this manner. From this village the road led up hills for about five wersts, and thence straight down to Baku. Though the distance was so small, the ascent very gradual, and we helped to pull, the horses could not without difficulty reach the top of the hill till towards evening. Leaving my comrade there, I went forward to

Baku to seek the house of an Armenian, whom S— had known at Astrachan, and to whose widow (he being now dead) and her brother-in-law he had directed us. They agreed to take charge of the things, and I went back to fetch them and my companion. The widow had a little boy, who, in the evening was learning his alphabet: with a view to benefit myself in my necessitous circumstances, I did not fail to show my learning, and officiously corrected him when he blundered. The widow and her brother-in-law were in consequence extremely civil to me, invited me to their table, and at my solicitation my companion was plentifully supplied. I staid with them a week, diligently instructing the child, and explaining to him the principles of our religion, in return for which I was well entertained.

Intelligence now arrived that our troops were already on their march from the river Kur for Baku: we hastened therefore to fetch the rest of our master's baggage, heartily thanked our hosts for their kindness, and departed. Owing to the scarcity of fodder our horses had not fared so well as we had done; they were in consequence in a very weak state, and could not proceed faster than a foot-pace. The ascent soon tired them: we felt a real horror of the muddy road, where we should have to encounter our former

labour again, and at last perhaps be obliged to rejoin our army without our horses. Luckily, however, we came in sight of it not far from the village where we had passed the night. Mr. S— seemed astonished at our returning with two horses only, and anxiously inquired after the third. I gave him a circumstantial account of the distress suffered by ourselves and the horses for want of food; but to evade replying he began to scold us for not coming back sooner. "They have not two pounds of flesh on their whole carcase," answered I impatiently; "they have hardly been able to crawl the short distance hither." S— quite lost his temper; his rage burst forth in incoherent words, and he began to load the poor creatures with a portmanteau and some other articles out of his *kibitka*. I stepped up to him, and pointed to the horses. "Not a pound more," said I, than they have already, or they will not stir from the spot!" He looked with manifest vexation at the horses, as though to reproach them for being incapable of enduring hunger, and likely to die before he could dispose of them. These thoughts were legible on his brow. The upshot was, he took back his things, retained the cart himself, and told me mildly to lead the horses gently to Baku, where he would try to sell them. Several officers having meanwhile come up, witnessed

this scene: they said jocosely, they supposed he was determined to send the animals back to their native country, to afford them the gratification of beholding their relatives once more before their approaching dissolution. Their strength was absolutely exhausted: whether I strove with all my might to pull them along, or held rushes to them to entice them forward, they would not stir. To the troops as they passed they furnished a subject of much merriment. Several asked whether I and the horses belonged to one another, and to whom we both belonged. I replied very gravely: "Mr. S— has forbidden me to say that I and the horses belong to him."—"Well then, thou art a good hand at keeping a secret," replied they. Others said, they supposed I was leading the horses to Baku to feast the ravens. "What a simpleton!" cried another; "just throw them down where they are and the ravens will find them fast enough, I'll warrant."—Entertaining as this might be to them, it was no very pleasant consideration to me, that I was scarcely halfway up the hill when my horses stood stock still, and night drew on apace. One of them seemed absorbed in meditation; he turned up his eyes once more to the sky, lay down quietly, and in a few minutes expired. Knowing S—'s character, I cut off the ears and tail to serve as a

certificate of the owner's decease. The other would not advance a step, and I was necessitated to take up my lodging on the hill, and pass the night in the open air exposed to incessant rain. Day had scarcely dawned before I began to pull the remaining victim up towards the point from which the road again descended, but he too was firmly resolved to serve my master no longer; he laid himself leisurely down, and with his last breath soon gave in his resignation. I provided myself with the same testimonials of his death as I had taken from his fellow-sufferer; but carefully concealed these evidences, wishing first to see how S— would take it. No sooner had I entered the well-known house than I heard the voice of my master, who, according to his custom, or rather his nature, was sounding his own trumpet, and relating to his hosts adventures in which he had never been engaged, without considering that it was but an hour after day-break, and that the people had something else to do than listen to his stories. Several of the Armenians of Baku nevertheless came to see him, and after he had received them I was admitted. As soon as he found that I had returned alone, he loaded me with abuse, called me before all the people a horse-stealer, for to a certainty I must have sold the horses. "Only think what a scoundrel it is!" exclaimed

he, turning to the Armenians: "he has robbed me of two capital horses, which I bought in Persia: one of them was a gray, and cost me five hundred rubles; and for the other, a bay, I paid nearly eight hundred." The simple folks believed him, and seemed disposed to join in his invectives. I then begged my master to have a little patience, and showed him before them all the tails and ears. "Here," cried I, "are the ears and tails of your horses. The whole army can bear witness that they were quite exhausted: the one died nearly on the spot where you would have burdened him with a fresh load, and the other on the top of the hill; but as to the horses which you bought in Persia, I have never yet set eyes on them."—"What!" cried Mr. S—, "darest thou use such language to me?" and, spitting in my face, went to his own room. I exposed his swaggering to the people and followed him, for I was resolutely bent on quitting his service here, and therefore thought it necessary to exhibit him, especially to our hosts, in his true colours, in order to maintain my place in their good opinion, for I was sensible that I could be far more serviceable to them than he.

The mistress of the house did not turn her back on me; she gave me a share of all that the family had for themselves, and I in return took

pains to instruct her son. Mr. S— lodged with them, but was feasted by the Armenians of the place in succession; and there were days when he did not come home at all. He promised each of them all sorts of good things, and they made him the more welcome, for they were silly enough to believe him. Though I lived well here, yet as I had not to thank Mr. S— for it, I determined to give him no rest, and to demand what he owed me; and that I might have the better chance of success, I always applied to him before witnesses. I chose in preference such times when he was invited abroad, and especially when he was at the houses of persons to whom he had talked most largely of his influence and importance. On such occasions I represented to him that I was barefoot, naked, and hungry, and insisted on his dismissing me, or keeping me decently as he ought. He would then refer me to his *denstschik*, but I answered publicly, that the *denstschik* had many times told me he had only sufficient for himself, and what he had was allowed him by the Emperor. I never could get any thing from him, and the upshot always was that S— drove me away: but I returned incessantly to the charge, because I was desirous of either being dismissed or obtaining something: the latter of which was the more ne-

cessary, as there was such a scarcity at Baku, that an egg cost twenty copecks.

Having for some time no work whatever to do, I usually spent the day in going about the town to see all that was worthy of notice; and to obtain a more comprehensive view, I frequently ascended the tower of the fortress, called *Kys-Galasi*, that is, Virgins' Fortress; and also the minaret belonging to the mosque: but the evenings I devoted to the instruction of the son of my hostess.

Mr. S— took it into his head to order me to go with his saddle-horse out to the *steppe* wherever there was the best grass, but not to shew my face again at his lodgings: about how or where I was to get my victuals he never said a single syllable. Not from implicit obedience, but out of curiosity to see how all this would end, I complied without opposition, but with this reservation, that I would be governed by circumstances in the execution of his commission. The horse had been presented to him by an Armenian; he was really a fine beast, but so reduced through my master's avarice, that compassion for the poor creature induced me to go with him and seek him out the best grass: for myself I begged charity of passengers, and at night I returned, in spite of the rigid prohibition, to my old quarters.

In this way I had gone on for some days, when, about the middle of the Passion-week, I perceived a party of fifteen Persians, who, on inquiry, told me that they were going to see the burning ground. One of the number was Murtasa-Kuli-Chan, for whose sake indeed this expedition was undertaken. I was heartily rejoiced at this favourable opportunity of exploring a new curiosity, mounted my horse, and rode along with them. From the town to this spot it was at least twenty wersts, but the fiery appearance was to be seen every night. This burning ground is situated on a hill near a village, opposite to the island of Awscharan, which frequently proves fatal on account of the extensive breakers which stretch out from its shore into the sea; for the mariners who arrive in these parts at night, seeing the fire rising from the earth, steer towards it, and thus many of them perish. Wherever there were pools by the road-side I observed naphtha on their surface: this substance is collected in all parts of the environs of Baku, and constitutes one of the principal articles of the trade of that town. The burning spot is enclosed with a stone wall, at least a hundred ells in circumference. The Persians residing there showed Murtasa-Kuli-Chan whatever they thought worthy of notice, with all the respect due to the brother of the

sovereign of Persia. Within the wall, which was built in ancient times by fire-worshippers, are apartments and likewise cells, in which the inhabitants of the adjacent village reside in winter. In the centre of each of these apartments or cells is a hole, in which a round earthen vessel without bottom, called *tonir*, is set for the purpose of baking bread or cooking victuals. To make a fire, the people scrape away a little of the surface of the earth, set light to it, and it is soon in a blaze. When the *tonir* is heated, they stick the dough in not too large lumps round about it, and in this manner the bread is soon done; or they set a pot on the aperture at the top of this hollow vessel, and thus dress their provisions. To extinguish the fire a little common mould is thrown upon it. In the roofs of these habitations there is always a hole to serve for the admission of light as well as the escape of smoke. The spot on which the fire is constantly burning is not more than four fathoms in circumference.* The soil in general is argillaceous and white; the fire issues from it as if blown out by wind, and is merely to be seen on the surface of the soil, the appearance of which is not in the least changed by it. The whole space enclosed by the wall consists

* A fathom is three *arschines*, or seven English feet.

of soil susceptible of inflammation, which is kindled and extinguished in the manner already described. The surface, like that of all clayey soils, has many small cracks and clefts, whence an inflammable vapour is continually issuing. The Persians informed us, that if a fire were made in the rooms, and the hole for the exit of the smoke closed, and the door shut, both would be immediately burst open with an explosion resembling that of gunpowder; and an experiment was made in our presence for the satisfaction of Murtasa-Kuli-Chan. In the middle of the enclosure is a well seven *arschines* in depth, in which was to be seen a little water. The upper part was walled with rough stone, but the mouth is not much more than an *arschine* in length. This was covered with felt, which was nailed on; a stone weighing at least a *pud* was laid on the middle of it, and a lighted brand was dropped underneath it into the water. A rumbling like that of distant thunder was immediately heard at the bottom of the well: it lasted about two minutes, and then projected the stone above the wall surrounding the top of the well. We were shown some Indians, who had just fallen on their knees to pay their adorations to this fire, which they hold sacred. They then fill, as we were told, their leather bottle, called *tushuk*, with the

gas which issues from the crevices, and carry it away with them as something peculiarly holy. On reaching their homes they perforate the *tusluk* with some sharp instrument, and apply a light to the very small aperture: the gas issuing from it, which till then was invisible, takes fire and burns till it is all consumed; and herein consists one of their most solemn devotions. To exemplify this, a *tusluk* closely bound up at one end was held with the other over such a crevice. When filled with the vapour the end was tied up; it was then pricked with a pin and fire applied to the hole. A small jet of fire immediately burst from the imperceptible hole, and lasted till the gas in the *tusluk* was exhausted.

This vapour, composed of naphtha and sulphureous particles, is extremely heavy, and we could not endure it above three hours. The people resident here assert, that a hearty man, not accustomed to it, could not abide in it more than two days without running the greatest risk of his life.

Murtasa-Kuli-Chan returned with his suite to the town, while I remained on the spot, leaving the horse to rest and graze, and did not get back to my quarters before nightfall.

For once I was extremely thankful to Mr. S— for having afforded me an opportunity to

see such a curiosity; but I could not help brooding more and more over the good I had done him, and the evil with which he had requited me, and therefore firmly resolved to break with him. Many of my readers probably have long imagined that it was a certain blind, silly hope, which induced me to put up with so much: but in fact the chief motive was the doctrine of the sacred Scripture: In your patience possess ye your souls,—and, by patience man overcometh all things. My attention was at length roused to my actual condition. Mr. S— kept me to work without caring in the least what I suffered or what I had occasion for, especially in the then very cold weather, when I was without shoes, stockings, or clothes. I was satisfied that I had fully proved what a man is capable of bearing; that it would be the highest folly to expect any thing good of Mr. S—; that I should not be justified before God, if I were to continue any longer inactive and blind to my own interest, as though I were determined to bring upon myself those evils which could not fail to be the result of such conduct. Accordingly I resolved to hesitate no longer, but to leave him the next morning. I once more reminded him of the promises which he had not fulfilled; that he had not procured an appointment for me; and that I was now bare

and naked. He seemed to listen to me with attention, but as all I could say was long known to him, he was merely considering how he could contrive to retain me with him; and he could devise no better expedient than to have recourse to his usual artifices. He again sought, as before, to persuade me that I was wrong to form so mean an opinion of my future lot; assured me that as soon as we returned to Russia he would obtain for me an excellent situation; and besought me to have patience till then. The more mildly he expressed himself, and the better tempered he seemed, the less patience I had to listen to him, and the more I was astonished at the hypocrisy and utter want of principle with which he strove to persuade me to the contrary of what I so keenly felt in mind and body. "No Sir," I replied, "I can no longer believe your words or trust your promises; they will never be fulfilled." Mr. S— affected to be offended. I once more urged his whole conduct towards me, and then referred to his treatment of his brother, whom he had robbed of a considerable portion of his property, and whom, without affording him relief, he had at last stigmatized as a drunkard. This reproof drove him quite beside himself; he loaded me with abuse, and bade me go to the devil, for he would have nothing more to do

with me. "No," said I, "Sir, I cannot go in this state: I must have something from you. You see how naked I am. If I am to remain at this season of the year, in this inclement weather, without clothes and without subsistence, I must soon perish. Instead of all you have promised, but taken good care not to give me, I solicit only some apparel and some money that I may be able to support myself till I find another situation."—"No," cried he, "nothing! Begone, and never presume to set foot in this house again."—With these words Mr. S— went to our hosts, and insisted on their turning me out of doors as a good-for-nothing fellow. They durst not excite his anger; he was in uniform, I in rags. A servant led me out, but whispered me to wait at a little distance. In about half an hour my pupil brought me something to eat, and told me to return quietly in the evening, and I might sleep in the stable. I wandered the whole day about the streets, went into the church, prayed with a flood of bitter tears to God to succour me in my extreme misery, and to conduct me to some place where I might lay my wretched head. For my encouragement and to strengthen my fortitude I called to mind the misfortunes and afflictions of great and eminent persons, and the state in which I had seen the Zar Heraklios at Ananur, and con-

sidered that we know not to-day what to-morrow may produce. The prosperous may be plunged into misery, and the indigent be as suddenly raised to opulence. To-morrow, perhaps, some lucky chance may unexpectedly turn up, as it has already frequently done; and where there is no other resource, patience is the only remedy. As soon as it grew dark I repaired to the stable, according to the direction of the son of my hostess; but the night was so cold that I could not get warm, and did not sleep a wink. The hours were as tedious as years. Early in the morning the boy came to me, bringing me some victuals. Notwitstanding my despondency, I gave him a lesson, and the sun was pretty high when I went out, taking good precaution not to be seen by Mr. S—. The day was likewise cold; I was almost naked, and the violent sea-wind was extremely cutting. This day too I witnessed a proof of the scarcity and distress prevailing in the city—I saw wood and dry dung sold by weight for fuel.

In one of the houses I heard Persian music, and saw many persons going in and out. I asked, out of curiosity, what place it was, and they told me that it was appropriated to bodily exercises. I went in and observed that every one, on entering, took substances of different weights in both hands, and played with them in

cadence with the music till he was quite tired. This exercise is believed to strengthen the nerves and cleanse the blood; besides which each individual is gratified with an opportunity of exhibiting his strength before the others. After staying about an hour in the house, and getting thoroughly warm, I felt the cold the more severely when I was again in the street. My feet pained me intolerably, and my whole body felt as if bruised and sore. In this deplorable state I resolved to beg Mr. S— to give me at least the felt mantle, which a Persian had forgotten and left with him. I found him luckily at home, represented to him my extreme distress, and asked for the mantle which the Persian had accidentally left behind. Mr. S— sharply observed, that it was very disagreeable to him to be reminded of the manner in which he had acquired so insignificant an article; he abused me before the people of the house in the grossest terms, asking, if he was bound to give me all he had (as if he had ever given me any thing), and at last kicked me from him. Bearing in mind the sufferings I had endured the preceding night I determined not to desist: falling therefore at his feet, I begged him for God's sake to take so much compassion on me as to grant this one request, promising to return the mantle in three or four days, as soon as I should

have found a situation. Mr. S—, at length perceiving that he could not get rid of me either with abuse or with blows, was under the necessity of fetching the mantle, which he delivered to me with a trembling hand, cursing me and my whole race, dead and alive, and heartily wishing me, soul and body, at the devil along with the mantle. To conclude, he strictly enjoined me to return it in three days, or he would complain to the magistrates of the town, and insist on my being expelled the place or thrown into the sea. I promised to comply, and hastened out of his sight lest he should alter his mind and take the mantle from me again. Thus terminated my business with him. For this acquisition, however, which was likely to afford me some protection from the cold, I thanked God with my whole heart, and committed myself to the care of his providence for my future life, resolved that nothing should ever make me despair. At nightfall I returned to my stable, wrapped myself up in my mantle (a piece of which I still keep in a crystal box as a memorial of what I then suffered), and slept soundly, for the kindness of the widow supplied me with a supper.

Next day I was going out of the town to the camp, to see the grand parade which had been talked of for several days past. Walking quickly

along, considering how I was to obtain a place, and get to Russia, I was met by an old man, who eyed me attentively, and asked, in Persian, who and whence I was. This question awakened all my sorrows, and all my feelings of the past and present: I replied with tears, that I was the most unfortunate of all the Armenians, the most miserable creature on the face of the earth; that I strolled about, passing the day and night wherever I could, and that I had no hope of succour but from the Almighty. "Wilt thou," said he, "enter into the service of a Russian major, who is paymaster to the little corps of Count Apraxin, and is now at Baku? I myself, who am a merchant, have served as interpreter to the corps; I know the major to be an excellent man, and am certain that if thou conductest thyself well, and servest him faithfully, he will never abandon thee." I threw myself at his feet, dirty as it was, imploring him for God's sake, and by the memory of his parents, to confer this favour on me, and promising to exert all my powers to serve my master with zeal and fidelity. "Well," said he, "come along; I will take thee to him at once." I accordingly turned back with him.

By the way I related to him how I had become acquainted with Mr. S—, and what I had suffered from him. When we arrived at the

Major's, my countryman went in first to inform him that he had brought him a servant. Major B— came out, looked at me, and started. The mantle was my only garment, and tatters of leather hung about my feet. "What have you brought me here? and where have you picked up this half-naked figure?" cried he to the Armenian.—"He is an unfortunate creature," replied the latter; "but, according to all appearance a very good fellow, who has been in the service of Mr. S—." "Aha! with S.—!" said the Major, and turned to me laughing with the question, how I had become acquainted with S—, and how long I had been with him? I answered him chiefly through the medium of the Armenian; for, though I understood all that was said in Russian, I could not speak the language myself. The Major expressed pity for me; told me that S— was long known to be the character I described him, and promised to be as kind to me as he had been illiberal, if I served him as honestly and faithfully as I had served S—; and at the same time fixed my wages at eight rubles in silver. I promised to do my best, on which he ordered his *denstschik* to give me his marching dress: I trembled with joy when I saw two *kurtkas* (a close waistcoat with sleeves) of scarlet, and two pair of pantaloons of fine blue cloth, short boots with silver laces, and a

small *kaska* (a sort of leather cap) with a feather. I washed off the long-accumulated dirt, trimmed my hair, put on my new clothes, and did not know myself. I felt as if raised from a state of death to life. With a joyful countenance I presented myself in my new apparel to Mr. B—. He noticed my delight, and was himself highly pleased in having had an opportunity of saving a fellow-creature who was ready to perish. "I give thee the two suits of clothes," said he; "and if thou servest me honestly and faithfully for a month only I will not stop here." Deeply affected by his kindness, I thanked him and the Armenian, the author of my good fortune, with tears of joy. The first moments I had at my disposal I devoted to the Lord my God, to whom I offered up my thanksgiving for delivering me from my misery. My soul was filled with the purest joy and the most fervent devotion, because he had so speedily confirmed my faith in his providence and mercy. I lay myself down and sleep, and rise again, for the Lord careth for me, said I to myself; I call upon him in the day of my trouble, and he heareth me from his holy mountain.

During the week that my master spent at Baku after engaging me, I was sent out by him on various errands. Many looked at me, were astonished, would not believe their eyes, and

asked if I was the same person who had lived with Mr. S—. I spoke in the highest terms of the kindness and humanity of my present master; and in two days the change which had taken place in my condition was known to all the Armenians, who were now strongly prejudiced against Mr. S—. They, as well as several officers, reproached him severely for his behaviour, and represented to him, by way of contrast, the benevolence of Major B—. I myself passed his lodgings as often as I could, and stopped to speak with any person going by, that Mr. S— might observe me: but all this rendered him no better disposed towards me. Instead of taking care not to add to the weight upon his conscience, he called on my master one day when he knew that I was not at home; and when Major B— asked why he had treated me so ill, he began to complain that I had cost him a great deal of money. He said that, when I was a child, he had sent me at his charge to school at Erivan; that he had given my parents one hundred rubles in silver to raise them from poverty, and they in return had placed me at his entire disposal; that I had caused him so many vexations that he had at last lost all patience and turned me out of-doors, because I was the most unprincipled wretch he had ever known; and he sincerely pitied Major B— for

engaging me, as I should certainly use him as ill in the end. It was evident to Mr. B— as well as to the other officers who happened to be with him, that S— had come for no other purpose than to traduce me; for no sooner had he poured forth his equally silly and malicious calumnies than he took his leave, and would not stop, though he was told that I should presently return, and then he might prefer his charges to my face. He had not been gone a quarter of an hour when I got back, and found them all in astonishment; and what Mr. S— had been saying was repeated to me, with many expressions of contempt for his character.

Let none of my readers imagine that in this delineation of Mr. S— I have laid on the colours too thickly, or that revenge has guided my pen. No; I wish only to hold up to him a faithful portrait of himself: to remind him of the equally sacred and incontestable truth, that beyond the narrow boundaries of this mortal life there is another where a rigorous judgment awaits us. Should this make no impression upon him, still it may serve as a caution to others who are not acquainted with Mr. S—, and who might therefore be duped, and become severe sufferers by his consummate skill in the art of hypocrisy.

Meanwhile the commander-in-chief had received orders to conduct the army back to

Russia: accordingly we made preparations to march. All the heavy artillery was put on board vessels, and sent home by sea. At the last parade, the general, in the presence of an innumerable concourse, asked almost every private soldier if he had any reason to be dissatisfied with him. They replied with one voice, that they respected him as their father, and should never cease to remember his kindness and to bless his name. This officer actually treated his troops with all the affection that the tenderest father can show for his children: this scene moved them all profoundly, even to tears.*

The Count went immediately from the front of the lines on board a yacht, and the troops proceeded along the shore to Derbent. Mr. B— took his passage in a frigate: he messed with the officers, and I with the sailors. Unaccustomed to the sea, I soon became sick, could eat nothing but bread; and even the water, which had been put into brandy hogsheads, was so nauseous to me that I could not drink it. On

---

* It is certain that Count Valerian Subow was universally reputed to be a brave officer and an excellent man: but he must already have been aware that the Emperor Paul the First was displeased with the expedition against Persia altogether, and had given a very unfavourable reception to many who had returned from it.—*Translator.*

the fourth day Mr. B—, observing my weak state, with truly paternal attention prevailed on the captain to supply me with victuals from his table.

The day passed tolerably well, but the night was dreadful. There was no end to mirth and jokes. Thus the captain passed high encomiums on a Moldavian, whose lips he praised as an index of the weather, for when they turned blue the wind immediately became favourable; and this was really the case.

I was so shaken and so fatigued with the incessant rocking of the ship, that I could neither eat nor drink, when, on the sixth or seventh day of our voyage, a tempest, accompanied with thunder and lightning, arose. I hid myself in a corner of the vessel and scarcely felt any thing of the waves which poured over me, when some one shook me, and I heard a voice say: "Get up, my friend, and pray: our last hour is come! If this storm lasts but a few minutes longer the frigate must strike upon a rock or founder." My weakness was extreme, but these words made a profound impression upon me, and seemed to restore my strength: I sprung up, and for the first time beheld death and all its horrors inevitable. It was about four or five o'clock in the afternoon; but as dark as though the sun had set. Sometimes our frigate

seemed to be lifted on the top of a hill, at others to plunge to the very bottom of the sea; and frequently she heeled on one side till the tops of her masts touched the water. Every moment we were afraid of being buried under the mountain waves that impended over us, or swallowed up in the abyss beneath. Before I was awakened, they had dropped an anchor, but found no bottom with a cable of more than forty fathom: the ship was therefore left to the will of Providence. All on board and the sailors themselves despaired. Here one took leave of another, there a third began to confess, while all turned their thoughts to the means of saving themselves.* These climbed the masts, those sought a plank or some other object to which they might cling in case of extreme emergency. In solemn prayer they solicited of God remission of their sins and deliverance, calling at the same time for succour on Nikolai, the enlightener of the world. In such cases the Almighty puts the confidence of his servants to the test.

The captain, though like the rest, thoroughly sensible of the magnitude of the danger, yet never lost his presence of mind, and exerted himself incessantly with the greatest activity. At length the storm abated, and all exclaimed with one voice: "God be praised! God be

praised !" and it may be said with truth that in a moment we were transported from death to life. All gave way to the liveliest joy, thanked God with tears for their deliverance, and embraced one another. In less than an hour from its first abatement the tempest had completely subsided ; the clouds dispersed ; the atmosphere became serene, and we enjoyed ourselves, the rest of the day. Some meanwhile looked out for birds as the sign of our approaching land ; others sounded the depth of the water ; and the captain took his perspective glass, but nothing was to be seen excepting sea and sky. The sailors sat round about in groups, relating events which had occurred on this tempestuous sea ; that one ship was dashed in pieces, another went to the bottom, and a third was stranded on the shore, where the crew were plundered and murdered by banditti ; and thus they aggravated the fears of others and their own. No sooner had the tempest abated, and scarcely did we feel as it were new-born or rather raised from the dead, when a perfect calm ensued, and excited apprehensions of a fresh storm in many who had experience in these matters : but before night a favourable breeze sprung up, and the captain, with a cheerful look declared, that if it continued, he hoped to land us early the next morning. The wind soon freshened ;

our frigate skimmed along more briskly than a bird, and the noise she made in ploughing the foaming billows was music to our ears. None of us slept a wink the whole night; all awaited with impatience the break of day, when, to our extreme gratification, we perceived birds flying about in all directions; soon afterwards the waters assumed a muddy appearance, and at length we discovered with the glass one of the islands at which the fishery of Astrachan is established. We were still at some distance from it when we saw masses of drift-ice: the people at the light-house, which is about two miles distant from the city, and fishermen, advised us to bring the frigate, which was heavily laden and could not well pass the shallows, to an anchor here: for but a few days before a merchantman from Gilan had been crushed among the ice, and the cargo and crew gone to the bottom. Mr. B. went with the other officers to the island of Sedlist, which is ninety-five wersts from Astrachan, where we arrived the third day afterwards.

Here my excellent master observing that I was far from well, begged the people of the house to take care of me and to let me want for nothing. Good living, rest, and fine weather, brought me about again in a few days.

I had heard in Persia, that in an Armenian church at Astrachan there was a clock which

struck the hours of itself: but the story was so extraordinary that I could scarcely believe it. The first time I went abroad therefore, I tried to find out this church, and went from one to the other without hearing any clock, so that I began to entertain still stronger doubts of the truth of what had been told me: at length I came to the principal Armenian church, saw a clock-face on its steeple, and soon afterwards heard the hour strike to my extreme astonishment. I bent back my head and kept my eyes fixed immoveably on it for at least half an hour. An Armenian who happened to be passing asked me, in Russian, why I was looking so stedfastly at the steeple. I acquainted him with the reason of my curiosity, and then inquired if he could inform me where an Armenian lived, who had been along with a merchant of Astrachan with the Russian army in Persia. "A good friend of thine, I presume," said the stranger, laughing; "come along with me." After conducting me through several streets he pointed to a building at some distance. "There he lives," said he. It was no other than the prison to which he directed me, as I soon inferred from the iron bars at the windows, and the look of the people who stood at them. I inquired nevertheless for my acquaintance, who presently appeared at the bars, and assured me

with seeming composure and sincerity that he was perfectly innocent; that if punishment were inflicted on him he would suffer unjustly, and his judges and those who brought it upon him would be called to a strict account for it by the Almighty. This innocent, however, seemed to me to be one of those who, the more guilty they are conscious of being, the more they strive to whitewash themselves: I admonished him therefore, if not on account of his deeds, yet to ease his soul, to confess himself guilty before God and to be resigned to his holy will; but I took care to make my sermon brief, lest too long a conversation might involve me also in something disagreeable.

In the market I saw for the first time boiled crabs, for though there are crabs with us, they are never eaten, and I had seen none but what were black. I went next to the market-field, where there was just then a great concourse of people listening to an imperial *ukase*. Here I observed several booksellers' shops, and immediately ran home to inquire how to ask for the book that teaches to read Russian; took money with me, returned to the market, and paid 20 copecks, without cheapening at all. While with the army I had felt a strong desire to learn to read Russian, but could not meet with a Primer. I was so overjoyed with my purchase

that I was almost beside myself, and fancied that I now possessed every thing. As soon as I reached home, I begged the servants to teach me, promising to reward them handsomely out of my wages. They were well satisfied with my offer, and I made the more haste about what I had to do for my master, that I might return to my A B C, over which I sat poring incessantly without stirring out of the house. My teachers admired my diligence. I paid them liberally for a person in my situation, the one in money, the other with brandy—in short, I stuck at nothing. My zeal occasioned a long conversation with the master of the house, who had heard of it, and wished to divert himself at my expense. He sent for me when Mr. B. was not at home, and asked me why I never left the house, and whether I had no curiosity to make myself acquainted with the city, which, as a stranger, it was absolutely necessary for me to do; adding, that sitting still learning the Primer could in the end be of no benefit to me, and that I was only wasting my time as I was already upwards of twenty.

I then asked him if he would give me permission to reply, and when he answered he would, I spoke as follows:—"I began to learn not account of my years, but from the conviction of my judgment, which told me how necessary

knowledge is for my happiness. If i were to do nothing but stroll about the city, and spend my time in the mere gratification of idle curiosity, I should lose the advantage which I shall doubtless derive from learning, by the blessing of God, to read and write Russian. I have, moreover, read, heard, and even know from experience, that the idle are not only useless but even prejudicial to others: whoever does not stick to work soon falls into irregularities, and at last into crimes. He becomes a burden to society, produces disturbances of all kinds, robs himself and others of what they have acquired with the labour of many years, nay, perhaps of a whole life: his tongue is the instrument of malice, slander, and calumny; in short, the life of an idler is full of ignominy, and in death he is often pursued by execrations. I am solicitous, on the contrary, to gain useful knowledge by learning, to become a good man, to be serviceable to others, to earn an honourable reputation, and when I die, to leave behind me a good name." Here I quoted an apposite text of Scripture relative to the indolent and ignorant. "I now venture to ask you," continued I, "what you would advise me to do."—"I see," said he, "that thou hast read much to judge in this manner; and from thy acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures thou art a Christian I pre-

sume?" This question vexed me exceedingly, and I was emboldened to reply with another question: "Who, Sir, according to the sacred writings, was the first to acknowledge Christ to be the son of God? Was it not Awgar, Zar of Armenia? We too have bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs, and though the Armenian nation was for some time enveloped again in the darkness of idolatry, yet the great Gregorii illumined us anew with the light of the Christian religion upwards of fifteen centuries ago. In our religion we differ not in the least from you, and we preserve it faithfully, in spite of all the annoyance and mortifications which we have to endure from the infidels, under whose yoke we at present live."—"As thou boastest that thou art a Christian," said he, "show me thy cross." —"No, Sir," I replied; "I wear no external symbol, but I believe and confess in spirit: in my heart I bear the cross of my Redeemer; there I preserve his seal till death, and I follow the voice of my Lord, which calls in my soul: 'Where I am, there shall my disciples be also.'"—These concluding words I pronounced with strong emphasis; but I then began to be afraid lest the landlord might take my boldness amiss and get me punished for it. Upon pretext, therefore, of seeing whether my master had come in, I retired, and hid myself in the

wardrobe-chamber, where I sat nearly two hours, till Major B. returned. The landlord reported to him his conversation with me, and both laughed heartily at the zeal with which I had vindicated my learning and my christianity. Next day, however, I bought myself a gold cross for three rubles.

We were detained at Astrachan upwards of a fortnight, though Mr. B— hastened his departure as much as possible, and that more especially for this reason, because an imperial mandate enjoined all staff and superior officers returning from the expedition to Persia to join their regiments within a specified time. The regiment of Rostow dragoons, to which my master belonged, was ordered to the fortress of Stawropol, on the Caucasian line, which he was anxious to reach as speedily as possible: but it was first requisite to procure a passport for me. He therefore inquired both my patronymic and my family name; was angry at the hard word *Astawaz-Atur*, that is, given by God, which was my father's name; and when he arrived at the office he had totally forgotten it, and therefore inscribed me by his own name, Iwanow, (son of Iwan.) I ought by right to have procured my pass of the Armenian magistrates, but they absolutely refused to furnish one, for which Mr. B—, with all the warmth of an irritable temper,

bestowed on them many a soldier's epithet, and took a pass for me from the government-office. For my part, I reminded my country-people of what they seemed to have totally forgotten, namely, that they were themselves no other than runaway Persian subjects, and had no reason to raise their heads so highly above me, for many of them when they came to Russia were most likely as badly or even worse off than myself. It was in the last days of May that we set out from Astrachan for Kislar; but in this journey we were exceedingly annoyed by mosquitoes. These insects occasioned me the loss of my cap, which I knocked accidentally off my head, and which I was unable to find, though I had gone but a few fathoms from the spot, because it was impossible for me to uncover my face, as the mosquitoes would have immediately filled my eyes, ears, and nostrils.

We arrived on the Thursday before Whitsuntide* in a village not far from Kislar, and stopped there till Sunday. The processions, the songs, the garlands, inspired me with a kind

* Semik, the seventh Thursday after Easter, or that preceding Whitsuntide, is a particular festival with the Russian girls, who celebrate it with public processions, following a young birch-tree adorned with ribbons and flowers, singing popular hymns, and at last dancing round it.—*Translator.*

of enthusiasm, which, however, was changed into great grief, because the cross that I had bought at Astrachan was stolen from me while I was asleep. Mr. B— too was far from cheerful, for the time appointed for him to join his regiment was long past. From this place to Alexandrow we travelled in great apprehension, which was increased when we came to a spot where, not above six hours before, the mountaineers had plundered a carriage and made captives of the travellers. On reaching Alexandrow Mr. B— was extremely mortified to learn that the regiment had marched from Stawropol to Torshok. He had a wife and children, whom he found in good health, at which as a good husband and father he heartily rejoiced; but he was greatly embarrassed in his circumstances, being by no means rich. Luckily the baggage of the regiment arrived at Stawropol about the same time as we: Mr. B— retained only what was most necessary for himself and family, and sold all the rest. Meanwhile he and his family went almost every afternoon to Bulgakow, a country-house not far distant, in the very pleasant environs of which rises a spring, where they usually staid till evening, and where Mr. B— enjoyed himself so much, that the secret grief which preyed upon him was not perceived by his family. Among those who assembled

here was the doctor of the place, a German. He thought proper to attempt to make me the butt of his wit, asserting that he was sure I was from Choi,* pronouncing the name of that town in a perverted manner. I was nettled by this indecent jest and the universal laughter which it occasioned. I begged leave to answer the gentleman with that perfect freedom which, though not becoming a servant, a man ought to assume towards his equal. As all the others assented the doctor could not but do the same: he added, however, that if I said any thing rude he could not feel affronted, as it would be spoken by a fool. I began by observing that he ought to have gone back to the original signification of this name, and to its first inventor; for this word had existed some thousands of years, and would in all probability continue to exist till the end of the world. The righteous Noah, namely, denominated the first spot where he planted the vine after quitting the ark, Eark-Uri, that is, the first-planted tree. He after-

---

* Whoever understands Russian will easily guess the smutty source from which the doctor seems to have derived his wit; and the reader who does not understand it loses nothing by his ignorance but an obscenity. I have retained the passage merely for the sake of the curious specimen of Armenian literature which is subjoined.—*Translator.*

wards removed his residence to another place, which he named Nachitschewan, or new abode. In the sequel he built Mairant, where his wife, the second mother of mankind, was buried, and this compound word, Mairant, means: the mother is there. Lastly, as his family increased, he settled his children and grandchildren in different places, and gave to each of them an appropriate appellation: among these was the city of Choi, which is the term applied to the beast, horse, or goat, that leads the herd. The word in those days, as at present, properly denoted strength, vigour; this name was given by Noah himself, and in the same language, which was spoken by our common progenitor, and which we Armenians still speak as his descendants, and the unaltered inhabitants of the country contiguous to the Ararat. He might now laugh as much as he pleased; but I knew that men of honour always avoid such offensive jests, and therefore I begged him in future to exempt me from them, and not lay such a burden on my shoulders, for I had enough to do to perform my duty; and was not here either to endure his taunts or to answer him: and if what I had said was at all unpleasant to his feelings he had nobody to blame for it but himself. My master, mistress, and the rest of the company, clapped their hands and cried

"Bravo! Bravo!" while I hastily withdrew and returned home.

Two days afterwards Mr. B— set out with his family from Stawropol. He, as a soldier, accustomed to light marches, was not a little annoyed by the great quantity of family luggage, both on account of the trouble occasioned by it, and still more on account of the expense, which tended not a little to straiten his circumstances. A *denstschik*, a serf belonging to him, and myself, sincerely sympathized in his disquietude. Our train consisted of a coach, in which Mr. B—, his wife, children, and a female companion travelled; a waggon with provisions; and another with the wife of the serf and her three children. From Stawropol to Tscherkask, the *denstschik*, the serf, and myself, underwent great fatigue: in the day-time we were oppressed by the intense heat, and at night were obliged to watch alternately, the one by the carriages, the other by the horses; and the third, who was in attendance on the Major, durst not go to sleep either, but was expected to be in readiness on the first call. We were, moreover, in great apprehension of mountain banditti; and the Gypsies, who rove about in these parts in numerous gangs, were not less dangerous. They might easily have fallen upon, plundered, and even murdered us: but, God be praised, we met with but one ad-

venture, on the evening of our arrival at Tscherkask, which, though indeed untoward, was nevertheless ludicrous. We usually halted in the *steppe*, where the horses recruited themselves, and grazed. It was my turn that night to watch them. I had had no rest for several successive days, and was so weary that I could not help dropping asleep; but no sooner had I closed my eyes than I heard a slight noise, and we soon discovered that some Gypsies, who were encamped not far from us, were endeavouring to steal one of our horses. Forgetting my own danger, and that to save one horse I was exposing twelve others to the like peril, I shouted in Persian, *charai!* or watch! ran after the gypsies, to see to which tent they would take their prize; but while I was pursuing them I recollected my imprudence, and hurried back. Next morning, as soon as Mr. B— stepped out of the carriage, I informed him of the robbery. He was extremely angry, took me along with him immediately to the tents of these universal plunderers, loaded them with opprobrious epithets and menaces, reproached them with their dishonest way of life, which rendered them outcasts from all mankind, and had even patience enough to take the useless trouble to advise them to seek to improve their condition, and not to leave their children the same infa-

mous character which they bore themselves for their inheritance. He did not consider that they were satisfied with their lot, that they liked to rove about the world unconfined to any particular spot, and to subsist by theft and deception. The Gypsies at first concealed themselves, but presently surrounded us to the number of fifty at least, holding out their empty hands, and crying: "Look, I have stolen nothing!" Mr. B— was hereby still more exasperated, and I could have burst with laughter, had we not been encircled by a great crowd of them, and found ourselves in some danger. Mr. B— showed them his sabre, and threatened, if they did not give up the horse, to have them all apprehended and carried before the proper authorities. At length the eldest of them exclaimed: "We did yesterday meet with a stray horse; perhaps it is your's. You may look at all we have." Mr. B— accordingly looked, but could not discover his horse; and we were about to return when I recognized the animal, though he was covered with mud, and his mane and tail had been cropped. The Gypsies made no objection to deliver up the horse, but had the impudence to ask for money to buy brandy.

In the evening of the same day we reached the Don, and crossed over to the city. So far I had acted as postillion, the *denstschik* as coach-

man, and the serf drove the waggon. I knew not that in the rainy season, when the roads are much worse than in summer, it is necessary to keep the middle-way as being paved ; and therefore, when we came, not far from Tscherkask, to three ways running by the side of one another, I asked the *denstschik* which of them I was to take : he could not tell me ; so I chose that to the right, and presently the carriage stuck fast in the mud. Kind and benevolent as Mr. B— had hitherto been to me, he now gave me a sound drubbing with a Calmuck whip, though I was not at all to blame ; and he should have directed us himself, if he had been better acquainted with the road. The *denstschik* and the serf also received their due share, though the latter, who followed with the waggon, was still less in fault than we. As I had hereby furnished sufficient evidence of my incapacity for the duty of postillion, I was perched in place of the carman on trunks and boxes piled up to a great height, from which I had to manage three spirited horses. We passed through Tscherkask and Aksai, and halted for the night in the open country : neither did my master stop at Nachitschewan, which is inhabited by Armenians, probably for fear I might be induced to leave him, and to remain there with my country people.

Two days afterwards we had to pass through

a deep ravine. The coach stuck fast; I was unable to fetch up my team, and down hill the horses went at a great rate. Mr. B— called out to me to stop them; but I was so terrified at the depth of the abyss that I thought it necessary to hold fast myself, lest I should be thrown down it: as for escaping with a whole skin, I saw no chance of that. Letting go the reins I clung tight with both hands to the trunks, lest I should be precipitated beneath the wheels. My three horses quickened their pace, and before I was aware of it dashed the waggon against the coach: the fore-wheels presently came off, and I must have been killed had not the horses stopped of themselves as soon as they reached the level ground Here I again received such a tanning from Mr. B— that I shall never forget it.

On his arrival at Ostrogorsk he was sensible that if he continued to travel with his family he should not reach the place of his destination within the specified time. Leaving them, therefore, behind, he hired post horses, and took me along with him.

At the first stage on this side of Tula, in a village inhabited by Raskolniks,* a similar cir-

* *Raskolnik*, derived from *raskol*, schism, denotes a person belonging to a sect which deviates in tenets and customs from

cumstance occurred to what had already happened at Naura. While the peasants were greasing the wheels of the carriage I had the indiscretion to tell them, in answer to their inquiries, that I was an Armenian. Quitting the carriage they all instantly fell flat on their faces upon the ground. Mr. B— was just at the moment coming out to see how things were going on, and reproved me because I could not hold my tongue; assuring me that the whole time he had been in the service no such honour had been paid to him as was shown to me, and ordering me to step aside, and turn my face another way till the operation was finished. At length we reached Moskwa. I admired all the towns

---

the predominant religion. In Russia there are many sorts of these Raskolniks, most of whom are stricter in their discipline and also in their principles than the established church. Many of them have no regular priests, but speak, like the Quakers, when the spirit moves them, and rarely admit strangers to their meetings. They, likewise, keep their doctrines a profound secret, though many of them seem to be Anabaptists; for when a patient grows worse they are fond of plunging him again into the water, and not unfrequently kill him by such treatment. Very lately a sect has been discovered possessed with the horrible notion that emasculation is a sacrifice well pleasing to God. In general these sectarians have the character of extraordinary purity of morals and integrity.—*Translator.*

through which we had passed, but in the prodigious city of Moskwa my admiration knew no bounds. We staid there, however, but three days, and arrived safe and sound at Torshok.

Mr. B— had, from my first entrance into his service, promised to reward me for zeal, fidelity, and attention, and to make a permanent provision for me: he now proposed to enrol me in his regiment, and strongly recommended me to the Colonel, who also promised that he would never abandon me: but on my arrival at St. Petersburg, which took place on the 17th of August, 1797, I changed my mind, and immediatedly resolved to settle in that capital. There I found professors of my own religion, and was informed by them what advantages I might enjoy in quiet, and how they, who had many of them come thither in no better circumstances than myself, had acquired those advantages under the protection of the Russian monarch and laws. I was enchanted with the beauty and vast extent of the city, and with the majestic current of the Newa. The brightest ray of hope beamed upon me, and a presentiment cried with a voice not to be silenced: "Here thou wilt find rest for thy soul, and prosperity!" Mr. B— at first applied for his removal to the Tula regiment of cavalry, and soon afterwards for his final dismis-

sion: he then strove to persuade me to accompany him; but I was so fascinated with the capital, and the hopes which I had formed of it, that I could not listen to his proposal. I thanked him heartily for all his kindness to me, and for bringing me to so magnificent a place, and thus bade adieu to him and his family.

Here, however, I had to suffer much, especially in the first years, but more that caused me to laugh than to weep. I raised myself by degrees to a respectable condition in life, and acquired property with my accustomed temperance and moderation.

By way of conclusion I have merely to add, that Russia is the only country where every son of a foreign land may depend on finding a propitious asylum and perfect security. Praise be to God, who hath prospered me in such manifold ways, who preserveth my life from destruction, who leadeth me from the gates of death and out of deep waters to the indisputable festival of the holy land, who hath given stability to my steps, and crowned me with favours and blessings! Thanks be to Russia, to which I will be faithful and devoted while I live! I heartily thank all my benefactors, whose memory I shall for ever cherish: and I sincerely forgive all my persecutors, cruelly as they have tormented me, and

wish with all my heart such of them as are already departed forgiveness of their sins, and those who are still living that they may become good and upright men.

POSTSCRIPT

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

Though our biographer concludes with such pious wishes for those who had been his enemies, yet, as accounts from St. Petersburg assure me, he has met with foes in that city. Indeed he is not likely to be without them in any country; for as his oriental vivacity frequently gets the better of that natural timidity arising from the oppression to which he was subject in early life, as he cannot damp his impertinent curiosity, little as it has frequently missed of plunging him into ruin, he never can expect that perfect tranquillity which is very rarely the lot of any individual.

Upon the whole, the hopes which he built upon his escape to Russia have been realized. He has resided several years in Paris, transacting commercial business for his countrymen at St. Petersburg, and there formed an acquaintance with M. de St. Martin, who mentions him in a

passage of his *Mémoires historiques et géographiques sur l'Arménie*, as having assisted the celebrated Chinese scholar, Mr. Julius von Klaproth, in the translation of a work from the Persian. He has acquired property, is at present engaged in a pilgrimage by way of Constantinople to Jerusalem, and is said to have promised to communicate to the world a continuation of his adventures.

END.

PRINTED BY G. SCHULZE, 13, POLAND-STREET, OXFORD-STREET.